

THE

LINK

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hey, ho, justin must go? since 1980



AND THEN THERE WERE FOUR.

Another Student Union VP Quits • News 3

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ELECTIONS: SECRET SLATE IN THE WORKS?

ALL IS NOT WELL

Another student union VP has resigned, putting forth serious allegations against the union's executive:

**Falsified financial documents,
A system of political patronage,
Increasing secrecy, paranoia,
Internal surveillance.**



• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS &
JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

On Feb. 14, Morgan Pudwell stood in front of 1,200 cheering students at the best-attended political event the Concordia Student Union has hosted in a decade.

Just two weeks later, Pudwell, the main architect of the rally, sat down with her fellow student union executives and was told she wasn't doing her job.

"We had an executive meeting on Wednesday and that was the first time they were remotely honest with me," said Pudwell, the former CSU VP Sustainability & Promotions.

"They went around the table and talked about how they didn't trust me. Then they went around the circle saying that I wasn't doing my job."

She resigned on Friday.

Pudwell's letter of resignation, sent to the CSU executive and Council at 12:16 a.m. on Friday, paints a bleak picture of the student union's inner workings. The letter shows an atmosphere where dissent was discouraged, Pudwell's personal life was the object of official inquiry and fellow executives increasingly policed her schedule.

"They took something great and they turned it into something bad," said Pudwell about the executive's reaction to the rally.

"Instead of talking about how we should do more things like this, it turned into 'Morgan is spending too much time talking to these people. Morgan is talking to certain students too much. It seems like she is

making alliances where there don't need to be alliances or with people who criticize the CSU."

"To me, people who criticize the CSU are the people we need. Even when the CSU is doing great things, we need those people around to keep the tension. Otherwise, things like this happen."

During Pudwell's organizing of the rally, she met with dozens of students to build a team of 40 volunteers to staff the event. While these meetings raised suspicion with her fellow executives, Pudwell alleges that CSU President Heather Lucas began looking at her personal life much earlier in the year.

"In December, we were told by Heather to create a shared calendar on [Blackberry]. If we weren't in the office we had to put down what we were doing, where we were and who we were meeting with."

While the system was originally used to help executives find each other during the day, Pudwell said it was gradually used more and more to track her whereabouts.

"It became something where if I had forgotten to put it in the calendar or it wasn't specific enough I was getting phone calls asking me where I am, who am I meeting with and why. Earlier this week I received an e-mail saying that I was having too many meetings with students and that I needed to spend more time in the office," said Pudwell on Saturday.

"It's not my job to sit in the office."

Among the allegations made by Pudwell in her letter was an issue of financial deception by VP Finance

& Clubs Ramy Khoriaty.

"[At one meeting] we were all told that we were in very serious financial circumstances," said Pudwell. "We had a one page print out of where every budget item was over, if not double."

"A week later, [Khoriaty] told us that it was a fabricated budget and it was meant to scare us and have us think about our money."

According to section 108 of the Quebec Companies Act, Khoriaty could be held responsible for untrue entries into the student union's books. Each untrue entry could cost the VP Finance \$100 if Pudwell's allegations are investigated.

On Feb. 15, Khoriaty told *The Link* that he had provided Pudwell and the executive with fabricated budget numbers to help rein in spending at the student union.

"The only budget I was allowed to see was my own, and near the end of my time there I wasn't allowed to see my own budget," said Pudwell.

In a press release sent on Friday afternoon, the CSU executive replied to Pudwell's allegations.

"Of grave concern to us is the baseless accusation of financial mismanagement. We have taken great lengths to ensure financial accountability and transparency. In this regards, we have made every budget line available to the student press and student body."

While *The Link* was provided with a copy of each executive's budget, it was not provided with every budget line. An online budget, without updated figures, is also available.

The breakdown in communications between Pudwell and the rest of the executive may have started early—possibly as early as Aug. 23 when CSU President Prince Ralph Osei resigned.

"When Prince left he didn't have enough time to write everything down or to train Heather," said Pudwell. "Over time, communications just kept degrading and degrading."

"I've been thinking of resigning since the student centre campaign," continued Pudwell, referring to a failed referendum question on Nov. 24. "I've been trying to find a way where I could express what I thought students wanted to talk about. That didn't happen inside the executive."

The student centre campaign, an attempt to get students to support a \$2.50 per credit fee levy to purchase the Faubourg, was defeated in late November by nearly 70 per cent of students that voted.

"When we came into office we knew that the student centre had a failed a previous referendum and I thought it was clear that we were going to learn from that and take this agreement and make it better for students," said Pudwell.

"That was my understanding going into the referendum, that we had done the best we could. Then I learned in the newspapers and heard from students about all these questionable things that were going on and that contract hadn't been changed at all since 2009," said Pudwell, mentioning a similar fee levy question that was defeated in March 2009.

"Students were lied to during the referendum," said Pudwell. "I refused to vote yes and the executive saw that as a breach of trust and support, while I saw it as doing my job."

The CSU's official response to Pudwell's resignation dealt with the student centre allegations.

"We have not and will not make any concessions regarding the student centre project without broad public consultations," the executive wrote in the press release, announcing that a committee was investigating how to proceed with the project.

"It has become evident in the last referendum that there are several issues that need to be addressed before this project can move forward."

With the lines of communication broken down between Pudwell and the executive, the VP Sustainability & Promotions felt it was best to hand in her resignation and be a voice for students on the outside.

Three hours after Pudwell's resignation letter was sent, her CSU-provided smartphone was cancelled and she was locked out of her e-mail—all at 2:56 a.m.

While thanking Pudwell for her work, the press release from the executive hoped that her resignation "draws no ties to the upcoming elections."

The Concordia Student Union executive and the administration of President Heather Lucas has refused to comment on this story, despite several interview requests. They have promised to speak at the CSU Council meeting on March 9 at 6:00 p.m. in H-760.

The March to March



• COMPILED BY LAURA BEESTON

● March 2009

The Concordia Student Union election is one of the most controversial in recent history, seeing the spending of vast amounts of unaccounted money and the end of a six-year dynasty.

The Vision slate, under president Amine Dabchy, takes office.

● March 26, 2010

Fusion, the offspring of Dabchy's incumbent CSU, sweeps into office under a platform that includes the finalization of the \$43 million student centre and the creation of a bottle-free campus. Less than 10 per cent of students turn out to vote.

A question for a proposed \$2.50 fee levy to purchase a student union building is also rejected by 72 per cent of students.

● March 9, 2010

Hospitality Concordia confirms that the university's contract with PepsiCo. is set to expire in December 2010.

● April 2010

Newly-elected VP Finance Nikki Tsoflikis resigns, stating she was unaware of the time commitment necessary to being a student union executive. Zhuo Ling, who was formerly elected to serve as a JMSB Senator, is appointed to replace her.

● August 23, 2010

Prince Ralph Osei, elected president under Fusion, announces his resignation at CSU Council. Heather Lucas is appointed unanimously by council to take Osei's place.

● Oct. 2010

Osei confirms with *The Link* that the Faubourg is the site for the proposed student centre building.

● Oct. 26, 2010

The Link receives an anonymous tip that an "agreement in principle" had been made between PepsiCo. and the administration. Within minutes, Di Grappa confirms. The following day students, Sustainable Concordia and the CSU protest in solidarity against the agreement. Di Grappa signs off on the document, and resigns from his position as VP Services by the end of the week.

● Nov. 2010

Largely credited as being the most comprehensive campaign in the CSU's history, a second student centre referendum movement fails at referendum with nearly 70 per cent of students voting against it.

Morgan Pudwell, CSU VP Sustainability & Promotions, believes she was lied to about various aspects of the campaign and, after voicing concerns, begins to suspect her schedule is being monitored.

● Nov. 24, 2010

Pudwell organizes a discussion on bottled water, inviting both sides of the debate to speak and make recommendations. It is the first debate of its kind to take place at a Canadian university.

● Dec. 8, 2010

VP Finance Zhuo Ling announces his resignation, being unable to ful-

fill the duties of his position due to the time commitment necessary. VP Clubs & Outreach Ramy Khoriaty is appointed to replace Ling and administer the CSU's \$1.8 million operating budget.

● Dec. 11, 2010

AJ. West, President of the Cinema Student's Association, alleges Lucas and Dabchy vetted him to run in the CSU's 2011 election.

● Dec. 22, 2010

The Board of Governors dismisses Concordia President Judith Woodsworth with a \$703,500 severance package. In the weeks following, the CSU remains the only major university body, other than alumni relations, to not immediately call for mass resignations on the Board.

● Jan. 12, 2011

Debate rages at a CSU Council where a motion demanding a harsher stance from the CSU on the Board's apparent lack of transparency is passed.

● Jan. 27, 2011

At an Informational General Meeting, 150 Concordia students and community members approve a series of motions, mandating the CSU to hold a Special General Meeting on Feb. 14.

● Feb. 9, 2011

At a CSU Council meeting, all six motions brought up at the IGM are passed, despite moments of tension. At the meeting, students in attendance praise Pudwell for her organizational efforts.

● Feb. 14, 2011

1,200 graduate and undergraduate students show up to the SGM on the Hall building terrace for the most attended CSU political event in 10 years. Those present call on the CSU to protest expected tuition increases.

● Feb. 17, 2011

While President Lucas promises at the SGM that she will bring the students' concern to the board, she does not say a word at a subsequent Board meeting.

● March 2, 2011

The CSU executive tells Pudwell she isn't doing her job properly. According to Pudwell, they express a concern that she is congregating with students who are too critical of council.

● March 4, 2011

Pudwell resigns.

Later that afternoon the CSU announces a press conference to be held that day, but ends up rescheduling for Monday.

● March 7, 2011

The CSU calls off the second press conference, saying it will prepare its statement for the upcoming Council meeting.

Later that afternoon, for five minutes, 20 protesters demonstrate outside *The Link's* office. None of the protesters are willing to identify themselves or give any explanation as to why they are demonstrating or who was organized the protest.

Proof of the Puppeteer

Former Student Union President Running Secret Slate: Student



• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

A Concordia student is alleging that former Concordia Student Union President Amine Dabchy has been secretly cooperating with the CSU's current executive to run a slate in next week's elections.

Cinema Student Association President AJ West said that, on Dec. 11, he met with CSU President Heather Lucas at a Presse Café to discuss his future in Concordia politics.

What followed, he claims, was a surprisingly sophisticated vetting process that involved multiple meetings, interviews and a written exam.

"[Lucas] asked if I would be interested in running with the CSU and I said absolutely," said West. "She said 'you need to be 100 per cent into this right now or not. Your interview is in a half an hour.' So I said 'Ok yeah I'm in.'"

"Lucas was supportive in help-

ing us reform the Fine Arts Student Alliance's constitution," he continued. "So I believed in her and was interested in helping students out."

According to West, Dabchy showed up to the meeting and began testing him on his knowledge of the services provided by the student union. He was told to study the CSU's bylaws to prepare for a written exam.

"The last question of my interview," said West, "was 'AJ, how many friends do you have on Facebook?'"

West said the vetting process came to an end in mid December at Dabchy's downtown apartment. While meeting with a handful of the other candidates recruited by the student union, West felt uncomfortable and decided to back out.

"Amine said, 'if anyone doesn't want to do this, you need to get out now,'" said West. "That was when

I decided I wasn't going to be running with them because I didn't believe in what they were doing. Dabchy was president two years ago; I was concerned that he was involved in running a slate for next year."

The next day, West said he met Lucas, who asked for his assurance he wouldn't say anything.

"The first emphasis was that nobody was to know that Heather and Amine are involved in our slate at all," said West. "That was her number one rule: do not tell."

Both Lucas and Dabchy have strongly denied West's story.

"I've never heard of an AJ West," Dabchy told *The Link*. "I'm not involved in any kind of political planning at the CSU. We're a week away from the CSU general elections. This strikes me as something political. I wouldn't be surprised if we saw AJ's face on a poster next week."

CSU VP External & Projects

Adrien Severyns echoed Dabchy's statement.

"At this time of year, anything can be fabricated for political reasons."

West stressed that his allegations were not politically motivated.

Additionally, a thread of text messages provided to *The Link* points to a series of meetings between Lucas, someone they refer to as "Amine" and West. These correspondences largely substantiate his allegations.

In her letter of resignation, former CSU VP Sustainability & Promotions Morgan Pudwell referred to Dabchy as a "puppeteer," alleging that he has a worrisome amount of influence over the actions of CSU executives.

She also told *The Link* that she knew of other students who were approached by CSU executives to run in next week's elections.

"AJ is the only student I know of that specifically made it all the way to the room that Dabchy was in," she said. "I know of other students who were approached by members of the executive, but as far as getting to that room, he is the first."

West said he came forward "because Pudwell accused Dabchy of running a slate in the upcoming elections, and when the CSU's executive denied this, I felt I had to defend Pudwell's reputation. She has always been a helpful member of the CSU."

West added that he came to the press because he felt Lucas and the CSU were lying when they denied Dabchy was running a slate in the upcoming elections.

"The reason that I'm coming out with this is because Dabchy is involved and that Lucas said he wasn't. She knew he was involved and she lied about it, and that disappoints me."

THE VOID AND QUEER CONCORDIA DENIED

Legitimate Student Groups Not Eligible for Fee Levy Request

• ADAM KOVAC

Miscommunications with Concordia Student Union Chief Electoral Officer Oliver Cohen and CSU President Heather Lucas will keep two student groups from getting their fee levy requests on the March ballot.

Bilingual Magazine *The Void* and LGBT advocacy group Queer Concordia both received word from Cohen that their requests for 2 cent per credit fee levies would not be voted on by the Concordia student body due to not properly completing the application procedures.

"We were told to present [our fee levy proposal] at the CSU meeting in January," said *The Void* editor Cole Robertson. "I was informed by Heather Lucas

the day before that in addition to the four requirements [found in the CSU standing regulations], it was also required that *The Void* be a registered non-profit organization in order for the question to be approved.

"They didn't inform me that the deadline to have the incorporation documents in was 25 days prior to the election," he continued. "I was under the clear impression that it was the date of the election. So on Friday, 25 days prior to the election, we weren't incorporated yet, so we weren't able to be approved by the CSU."

As a result of the miscommunication, *The Void* will not be eligible to have their request for a 2-cent fee levy put to students until the Fall semester.

As if waiting weren't hard enough, there's a further complication for the nine-year-old publication. Robertson claimed that the CSU lost the 750-signature petition, which is one of the mandatory requirements for consideration for a fee levy. He added that this is from what he could gather, and suggested speaking to Lucas about the matter. Lucas has declined comment beyond an e-mail in which she said, "The only comments I have are that its unfortunate both groups were not able to get incorporated in time."

"At the meeting in January when we submitted this application, I placed the petition down on the CSU table and said 'I submit this petition for the review of council' or some such thing, and

then we left," said Robertson. "Apparently, they seem to have misplaced the petition or lost it, without ever having checked the names on the petition."

Queer Concordia suffered a similar setback, as their incorporation papers were not in on time.

"We are on the right side of CSU bylaws and the CEO is being heavy handed," said the group in a prepared statement.

Fortunately, things may yet turn out OK for the advocacy group. Queer Concordia member Joey Donnelly stated that he plans to attend the CSU's upcoming meeting on March 9, and hopes that a compromise can be reached to get the fee levy back on the ballot, given that they expect their incorporation docu-

ments to arrive this week. The group also needs to collect the required petition.

"It's a minor miscommunication," said Donnelly. "We'll gladly [get the 750 signature petition] if we're given a few days notice. It's not a huge undertaking."

Cohen declined to be interviewed, though he sent a brief e-mail to *The Link*.

"Any referendum questions not included on the announcement of polls were excluded because they were not in compliance with the requirements of the regulations as per Article 136 [of the CSU standing regulations]," said Cohen in his e-mail. "This is not an arbitrary or discretionary decision, as the CEO has no authority to override these regulations."

Hey Ho! We Don't Know?

Motives Behind Protest At *The Link* Unclear



Anonymous protesters picket outside of *The Link's* offices, deriding the student-run newspaper's journalistic practices. PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

• MEGAN DOLSKI

Most reporters at *The Link* are used to covering protests, but some of the newspaper's staff members found themselves to be the target of one upon stepping outside the office yesterday afternoon.

For a span of roughly six minutes, a group of about 15 tentative protesters stood atop the escalators on the sixth floor of Concordia's Hall building.

The demonstrators refused to identify themselves, answer questions or elaborate on their apparent grievances with *The Link's* editor-in-chief Justin Giovannetti. Despite speaking no

more than a few brief chants, they called into question Giovannetti's relationship with Concordia Student Union councillor Lex Gill.

The protesters claimed that Gill will run in next week's CSU general election and that she will be privileged by favourable coverage from *The Link*.

The demonstration was the first interaction any of these individuals ever had with *The Link*, prior to showing up at its doorstep. None of protesters had ever called, emailed, or attempted to contact any of *The Link's* editorial staff, despite having every opportunity to do so. Instead, they chose to make their

first encounter a hostile one.

Several bystanders and other people tangentially involved in the proceedings also declined to speak on record.

It remains unclear whether any of these students plan on running for office, however if they intend to do so, they are in violation of the CSU's electoral bylaws—which prevent candidates from campaigning before midnight of March 14.

Three CSU executives were seen near the protest as it unfolded, but denied any connection with the protesters.

"We had nothing to do with the protest," said CSU VP Academic & Loyola Hassan Abdul-

lahi. "[But] nothing *The Link* has ever written about the CSU has been balanced [...] I'm not responsible to *The Link*, I'm responsible to the students."

Abdullahi overlooked the fact that every member of *The Link's* editorial staff is an undergraduate student and therefore a dues-paying member the union.

Earlier that afternoon, Ricardo Hernandez Torres received a call while working at the Loyola Luncheon from a CSU secretary, asking for the whereabouts of Gonzalo Nieto and Lex Gill.

Nieto, an überculture executive with Gill, was in class, but said he received a text message from his friend who was at the

Luncheon, informing him that he was being paged. Nieto said he usually attends the Luncheon, yet finds it extremely odd that the CSU would be looking for him and Gill.

"It seems very conspicuous to me that they were wondering where Lex [Gill] was about an hour before they protest Lex," said Nieto, who can think of no reason why the CSU would be looking for him.

The protesters disbanded after Concordia Security asked them for student ID cards.

—With files from Christopher Curtis

No Money Trail for the 'Yes' Campaign

CSU Executives, CEO Haven't Produced Campaign Budget Lines

• ALEX DI PIETRO

The Concordia Student Union released its annual budget report Friday, but specific amounts pertaining to its spending on the "Yes" campaign for the Student Centre in preparation of November's referendum still haven't been revealed.

Standing regulation 229(d), which can be found via the CSU website, clearly states the maximum amount of election expenses a candidate may use for a particular office or referendum committee is \$375.

"Yes" Committee Chair Adrien Severyns and the CSU's Chief Electoral Officer Oliver Cohen either claimed to have had no immediate knowledge of the amounts spent or didn't have "the time" to divulge them, despite repeated attempts made by *The Link* over a period of several days to procure a budget breakdown of the individual campaign.

"I don't have the numbers in front of me now," said Cohen, whose position demands non-partisanship to ensure an impartial voting process. "All I know is that it was within the budget and it was

dealt with accordingly."

Article 237 of the standard regulations stipulates that "within 25 days after the expiry of the time prescribed for filing returns of election expenses, the Chief Electoral Officer shall provide a report to Council that includes a summary of every return received within the prescribed time."

To date, the only numbers available to the public are those in the report that was issued on Friday, which only contains the latest official total amount the CSU spent on campaigns.

But in a three-page letter de-

tailoring her resignation from the position of VP sustainability and promotions, Morgan Pudwell said the executives "were recently presented with a financial update which indicated that nearly every budget line had been over-spent."

"We were told not to speak to anyone about our current financial situation, and were presented with no solutions," she continued.

Expenses for the campaign included T-shirts, printing, posters and flyers, according to VP Clubs and Finance Ramy Khoriaty.

However, it was confirmed by Severyns in late November that

the salaries paid to the CSU's Campaigns Coordinator Daniel Shakibainan and lawyer Francois Longpré had come out of the "Yes" campaign's budget. Videos on the CSU's website and a K'Nex structure in the Hall building's mezzanine were also used to promote the campaign.

With the next CSU general election looming, the certification for November's referendum still hasn't been brought to council, but Judicial Board Chair Bella Ratner confirmed Sunday that the referendum had been certified with the JB on Dec. 20, 2010.

What Would Jesus Drill?

Quebec Christian Organizations Oppose Shale Gas Exploration



PHOTO DANIEL FOSTER

• MEGAN WOHLBERG

Christian organizations in Quebec joined the growing mobilization calling for a moratorium on shale gas exploration last week.

The Réseau oecuménique Justice et Paix, along with the Bishop's office of the Montreal Anglican Diocese, are denouncing what they say is the government's "ungodly" pursuit of economic gain at the expense of public and environmental safety.

"It is our ethical conviction that the right of people to their well-being and to the health of their territory should take precedence over privileges granted to industry by the state," the 28 member organizations of ROJeP stated in a press release. "To show contempt to the land is to despise the people that inhabit this land."

The Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement recently published an environmental impact report on hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," but Quebec's Minister of Sustainable Development Pierre Arcand has yet to publicly release the results of the inquiry, which began late last summer.

A parallel report issued by a citizens group calling themselves *Maîtres chez nous 21e siècle* was released to Minister Arcand last Monday. Based on 200 documents, the 123-page online report calls for a stop to fracking in Quebec, noting that shale gas is not economically viable and does not meet standards for clean, sustainable development.

Among the 200 documents reviewed within the *Maîtres chez*

nous report was a cost analysis from l'Institut de recherche et d'information socio-économiques, which estimated more than \$50-million per year in losses for the province of Quebec from the shale gas industry.

"The raison d'être of the government is to look after the public interest and not be enslaved to industry," said Guy Côté, a representative from ROJeP. "There is a lack of transparency and the government has acted without sufficient evaluation of all the consequences. There is almost a despondency for people's concern because of the priority given to the economic growth falsely expected from this project."

The ecumenical network's recent announcement is part of a growing opposition to fracking across the province.

According to a recent survey of 1,000 Quebecers conducted by *Le Devoir*, 55 per cent are against drilling for shale gas—up from the 37 per cent last September. More than 128,000 people have signed an online petition calling for a moratorium on development.

"More and more controversy is arising," said Reverend Gwenda Wells of the Anglican Diocese. "But despite the fact that there are rising concerns about radioactivity in groundwater, no studies have been done on the water leaking from shale gas fracking [in Quebec]."

The New York Times recently obtained documents showing that waste-water resulting from fracking is "often laced with highly corrosive salts, carcinogens like benzene and radioactive elements like radium," which,

when discharged into rivers that supply drinking water, contain higher levels of radioactivity than can be safely treated. New York state imposed a moratorium on fracking last year.

Geraint Lloyd, a geophysicist and independent consultant on drilling within the St. Lawrence Valley, told *The Link* in September that risk of groundwater contamination was low due to an incredibly high water-to-chemical ratio, the depth of drilling and the non-porous nature of the shale rock.

"Any sort of failure or contamination issue comes down to engineers, not the procedure," he said. "With the high safety standards in Quebec, I can't see this being an issue."

But the Charest government's stance has shifted considerably over the last six months since two thirds of the 31 existing exploration shafts were found to have leaks. In mid-January, Minister Arcand admitted that "the industry is not in control of the situation" and that he was "extremely concerned."

"The government is responsible for being a good steward of the resources entrusted in its care," said Rev. Wells. "Its responsibility as an elected caretaker organization is to make sure development is not approved if there is reasonable doubt that it is not safe for humans and the environment."

An estimated 40 billion cubic feet of shale gas reserves exist in Quebec with the potential to sustain the province's energy needs for the next 200 years, according to the Department of Natural Resources.

Sustain Yourself, In The City

Living Downtown Is No Reason Not To Do-It-Yourself

• MEGAN DOLSKI

Are you smarter than an Australian brush-turkey?

If you think you are, then according to Scott Kellogg, you should have no trouble composting. If these birds can do it, most likely you can.

Kellogg is a self described "post Earth Day child" who is the primary teacher of R.U.S.T. (Regenerative Urban Sustainability Training) and the co-author of *Toolbox for Sustainable Living: A Do-It-Ourselves Guide*.

He will tell you that living in an apartment in downtown Mon-

tréal is not a valid excuse for not composting. And that it shouldn't prevent you from growing your own food, collecting your own water or having a worm-box, either.

During his presentation at Concordia's Hall Building last Thursday, Kellogg explained that all of the above are both feasible and rewarding in urban areas.

He journeyed from Albany, NY to open a two-day long conference called "Moving Forward: An Inter-Community Discussion," an event that's overarching purpose was to uncover the university's role in urban sustainability.

Kellogg explained to students and members of the community that while cities are not commonly regarded as an ideal place for agriculture, the two can actually fit together quite well. He cited many plants, such as the kiwi-berry, that can easily grow up walls, and said most mushrooms thrive in shady dark areas that are plentiful in cities.

Kellogg also touched on types of sustainability that had nothing to do with food. An audience favourite was his suggestion of biological lawnmowers.

"Goats in the city," he said. "It's an idea whose time has

come."

While each individual's efforts are important, Kellogg said, community interdependence is the key to successfully practicing any kind of urban sustainability. "It will do us no good to be self reliant if our neighbors aren't as well," he said.

Cameron Stiff, coordinator of Concordia's Food Systems Project, was also in attendance. He updated students about some of the initiatives they could take part in, and Laurence Feauteax, Coordinator of Vert en ville, provided information for anyone interested in contributing to or volunteering

at Concordia's greenhouse.

Kim Fox, one of the event's organizers, said she hopes that everyone who attended left excited to start projects with urban agriculture around the city and that they realize that they have the opportunity to control their own food despite living in a city.

"There is so much opportunity and access to resources, even right here at Concordia," she said. "The hope is that the various projects at Concordia will give people a base training so we can then hook them up with the community where they can apply their skills or do it themselves."

Briefs

Stabbing in Villeray

A 30-year-old man was stabbed multiple times at an apartment in Villeray at 1:30 a.m. Monday morning. Another man was later arrested, as was a woman who had fled the scene. The woman had 1,000 pills in her possession.

Igloo Collapse Causes Death

A South Shore man died after an igloo he was building for his partner's son in his backyard collapsed on Friday. The young boy witnessed the incident and alerted a neighbour. The man, who was in his 20s, died in hospital.

One Killed in Kirkland Crash

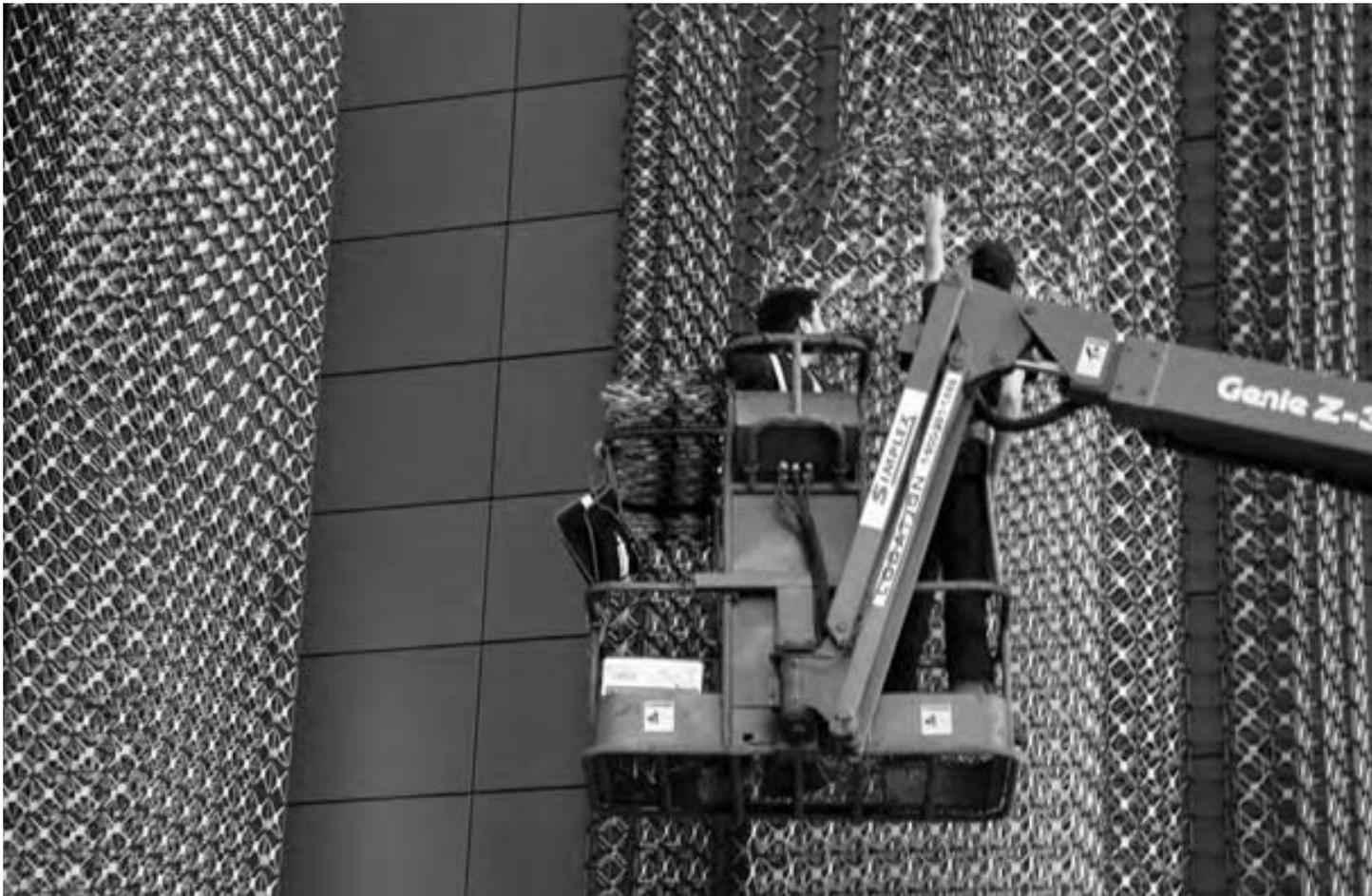
One man was killed and another was injured in an early-morning crash on Sunday. The 21-year-old man lost control of his vehicle along Highway 40 around 3:30 a.m. The driver died at the scene and the passenger was taken to hospital with minor injuries. Excessive speed and slippery road conditions are being blamed.

Montreal uses corn sugar in de-icing effort

The downtown Ville Marie borough of Montreal is testing a product called Bleu Fuzion, a magnesium chloride brine with corn syrup and blue colouring added. The product is added to the road salt before it is spread, making the salt slightly sticky and helping it melt the ice more quickly. Montreal is testing more cost and environmentally efficient means of de-icing.

Quebec Doubles Speeding Fines in Construction Zones

As of this Thursday, March 10, Quebec drivers caught speeding in construction zones will receive double the usual fine. The change comes two months after two signal workers assigned to highway-construction sites died after being struck by speeding cars.



Concordia Engineering students erect a 37-foot K'Nex space shuttle. Since the theme for this year's project was women in engineering, students were inspired to build a shuttle because of Julie Payette—a pioneer for aspiring women Astronauts in Canada. PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

Renewing the Campaign Trail

Haitian Presidential Candidate Visits Montreal



PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

• JULIAN WARD

Haitian presidential candidate Mirlande Manigat was in Montreal this past weekend to raise support for her campaign in the second round of elections taking place this month. Manigat is squaring off against musician Michel "Sweet Micky" Martelly on March 20 after last November's controversial election failed to produce a clear winner.

It took over two months for the Haitian Electoral Council to decide which two of the top three candidates would be on the final ballot.

Outgoing president Rene Preval's handpicked candidate was finally eliminated after widespread allegations of vote rigging and fraud were made against him.

Manigat was in Montreal to reach out to the 100,000 members of the Haitian diaspora, who, though ineligible to vote, can send money and sway family members living on the island.

"I'm campaigning outside of Haiti not for votes but to convince these people that I take their interests to heart and that I am counting on them to support my candidature," said Manigat.

"These people can't vote in Haiti because our constitution

excludes those with dual citizenship from the electoral process," she said. "But I am here to reaffirm my opposition to that aspect of the constitution and to let people know I will fight for their right to vote."

She also took a moment during her press conference to thank Canadians for their generosity of both time and money in aiding the relief efforts after the devastating earthquake which saw over 230,000 killed and over one million left homeless. The country has been further affected by a cholera outbreak that has claimed 4,000 lives so far.

"It's a tragedy for us, seeing as how 60 years ago cholera was wiped out of Haiti. This should be a priority," said Manigat who is advocating for improved sanitation and access to clean water to help curb the epidemic.

She said the worst of the cholera epidemic has already happened but that Haitians will be feeling its effects for quite some time.

Manigat also spoke of the political realities in Haiti and how Haitians must not give up on the idea of democracy. She added that Haitians are not motivated to take part in the political process—and rightly so.

"We have a predator state that

doesn't really control anything. The few resources we have are poorly used. I believe that we need to send a message to our compatriots, that we are taking this problem seriously," she said.

One of Manigat's other major talking points was on NGOs in Haiti. Of the nearly 500 that are operational in the Caribbean nation, only about 15 per cent are registered with the government.

"A responsible government will put order into the NGO situation, it will demand the application of law, it will demand annual reports, it will demand the NGO open a Haitian bank account as is required by law," she said.

Manigat also spoke about the return of dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier and the impending return of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was ousted in an American-led, Canadian-supported, coup d'état in 2004.

"Both [Aristide and Duvalier] have the right to live in their native country. But they have to respect the laws of the republic," she said.

"The presence of two former presidents in our country conjures different memories. Memories that could produce agitations and with the situation we find ourselves in, the country needs calm and serenity [right now]."

Israeli Apartheid Week Kicks Off

Divestment Sanctions, Academic Boycotts Slated



PHOTO DAN HALUTZ

• MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Ending occupation in the Middle East is a process that has to begin at home, say the organizers of Montreal's seventh annual Israeli Apartheid Week taking place this week.

Joining 50 cities worldwide, activists at Concordia, UQAM and McGill are calling for Canadian universities to join the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against Israel under this year's theme, "BDS on Campus: From Education to Action."

"The focus of Israeli Apartheid Week this year will be to examine the ties between our academic institutions here in Montreal and academic institutions in Israel which are complicit in supporting the military occupation of Palestinian lands," said Rana Salah, a Concordia undergraduate student

and one of the organizers of IAW.

This year's keynote speaker will be Ali Abunimah, the founding journalist behind the online news site Electronic Intifada, whose focus will be the growing international BDS movement. The international campaign began in 2005 and calls for a cultural, economic and academic boycott of Israel modeled after initiatives taken to end South African Apartheid.

While the cultural boycott has gained momentum over the past years with artists like Bjork, Elvis Costello, and the Pixies cancelling concerts in Israel, the academic boycott has been more controversial. The University of Johannesburg in South Africa is the only school to have officially set conditions around its relationship with an Israeli academic institution, Ben-Gurion University, in Sep-

tember of last year.

McGill principal Heather Munroe-Blum is among those who condemn the academic boycott. In 2007 she stated, "[I]f you choose to isolate Israeli universities, you should add McGill to your boycott list. We will stand steadfast against those who seek to undermine academic freedom."

"Some people see [the academic boycott] as an issue of academic freedom and free speech," said UQAM sociology professor Rachad Antonius, a speaker at this year's IAW. "But it is not about preventing ideas from being expressed. It aims at preventing formal academic links between institutions as a peaceful way of making known how universities [in Israel] are supporting the occupation in many ways, such as resource appropriation."

McGill and Concordia both co-

ordinate exchange programs, such as the Goldie and Joe Raymer Fellowship, joint research projects, and scholarships with the Israeli Institute of Technology, commonly referred to as Technion University.

The relationship has been a divisive one in the university community. Last year, a group of students, professors and staff from Concordia and McGill published a 13-page report outlining Technion's links to military technologies and manufacturers and the punishment of dissent on the Israeli university's campus.

"Not only is McGill complicit in the military-industrial complex on its own campus, but through its bilateral cooperation agreements with the Technion University [as well as Concordia University], [it] normalizes relations with, and helps reinforce the

standing of an academic institution that directly and indirectly perpetuates the apartheid system of the Israeli state, and the ongoing oppression of the Palestinians," the report states.

Apart from the focus on BDS, the schedule includes a talk by Clayton Thomas Muller of the Indigenous Environmental Network and residential school survivor Audrey Redman, who will be drawing links between displacement in North America and Palestine.

"If you're going to talk about colonial issues overseas, you have to look at issues in Canada," said Salah. "A lot of Canadians have a hard time understanding the Middle East because they don't understand Indigenous issues here. But they are the same kind of struggles for sovereignty and equality."

HOW TO PLAY THE BELL CENTRE: TECHNICALLY, THE METRO STATION NEXT TO IT, BUT STILL...

Busk a Move

Getting a Gig in Montreal's Most Populous Venue: The Metro



Bangin' on the blue line: buskers add a certain extra something to your commute. PHOTO JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

• MEGAN DOLSKI

Echoes of Johann Sebastian Bach resound through the basement walls of the Saint-Jean-Berchmans church on Cartier Street in Rosemont. The large, well-lit room is bare except for a cameraman, green-screen, a panel of judges, a registration table, a few onlookers and a man named Charles Muis, who—along with his violin—is the source of the intricately played music flowing through the space.

Muis is in the midst of an audition. He hopes to be granted a membership at Le regroupement des musiciens du métro du Montréal—a union that represents the interests and rights of the musicians and buskers that play in the Montreal Metro.

He is the first of many that have registered for the day's tryouts. Musicians must pre-register for auditions, which take place every Sunday, and will last until everyone that wants a chance to try out has had one.

In order to become a member of

the RMMM, musicians must pass an audition in front of a panel of experts. If they are given an OK, they then have the option of paying a \$60 fee for an annual membership.

While the RMMM membership card is not a requirement to play music in the Metro, there are certainly numerous benefits that go along with having one.

Stéphane Lemieux, president of RMMM, explained that the union acts as a vehicle for Metro musicians to express their needs and concerns to the Société de Transport de Montréal and vice versa. Lemieux said that joining the RMMM gives musicians increased credibility and, most importantly, a voice.

Lemieux recognizes that the Metro is a shared space and says that the union works closely with the STM in order to ensure that everyone's underground musical experience is enjoyable.

While he is currently pleased with the RMMM's collaboration with the STM, Lemieux hopes to take their relationship to the next level. Ultimately, he would like to

see the RMMM membership card become recognized as a permit—required for anyone wanting to play music in the Metro.

The RMMM and STM have been meeting frequently and will continue to do so over the upcoming months. Lemieux says to expect significant developments in the next six months—but he can't reveal anymore than that.

While legal advances are important to him, Lemieux also focuses his efforts on ensuring that buskers are recognized for the important role they play in the lives of Montrealers.

"We want to promote the role of the musician in the Metro, which is to bring people back to their emotions," said Lemieux. "People pass by on their way to work and school, and we try to bring them back to their feelings."

Jean-François Lapierre has been playing music in the Montreal Metro since the '80s, and has recently taken up the position of vice president of RMMM.

Lapierre is a full-time busker who wakes up very early, often as

early as 5 a.m., to schedule his playing slot for the day. He feels similarly to Lemieux in that his main goal is to touch people with his music.

Lapierre takes his job very seriously and hopes that he is not seen as a charity act.

"I'm not looking for generosity," he said. "The way I see it, I'm proud of what I do, and hope people appreciate it."

This is the mindset the RMMM is looking for from candidates at its auditions. This year's panel is made up of musical experts Jean-Pierre Labrèche, Ray Malone and Alexis Cochard.

The panel will ask those auditioning to play two pieces of their choice. They will then use a basic list of criteria to evaluate musicians in various categories. Regardless of how the audition goes, the panel will provide the artist with feedback, and offer them tips on how to improve.

"We try to bring them to a professional level," said Labrèche.

The judges explained that while they are there to weed out the con-

testants who "don't even know which way to hold their guitar," they aren't there to be the gatekeepers of an exclusive club.

"It's not American Idol here. We aren't here to laugh at anybody or put them down," said Malone, the coordinating judge. "What we really need to think about are the people who are walking through the Metro everyday—we must ask ourselves, is this acceptable for them?"

The judges explained that they see a wide range of styles and talents at auditions. While obviously honed talents such as Muis are a shoe-in for the card, you don't have to be virtuoso to get into the RMMM.

"If we see that if in their heart they are a musician, then that is fine with us," said Malone. "We are not here to judge who is and who is not a musician."

As the vibrations of Bach in the background switch over to the mellow chords of a folksy acoustic duo, it's evident that RMMM's search for true and passionate musicians is off to a good start.

Full-Time Poetry

All This Could Be Yours Talks “Weightless, Insubstantial, Ordinary Mortality”

• ISADORA ARREDONDO

Joshua Trotter's debut poetry collection, *All This Could Be Yours*, won immediate favourable reviews for no reason other than its authenticity and aesthetic simplicity.

When Michael Lista of the *National Post* picked Trotter's release as one of the five best collections of poetry of 2010, he made it clear that having only one Canadian on board was not another Canadian content quota-based choice.

“To include Canadians' work for publication based on any other rubric than their merits is to prolong artistic infancy,” he stressed.

Trotter recently moved to Montreal and is pleased to have a job that allows him to stay at home and do what he loves to do: write poetry.

He claims to have no particular theoretical concerns and, like many other writers, he writes because he has no other choice, and because doing otherwise would mean his own demise.

As a result, his collection of poetry is less than a book in and of itself, but an expansion of and an expedition into his own metamorphosis.

Unlike most contemporary poets, who are often reluctant to seek comfort in traditional styles,

Trotter is not afraid to explore all of them; he sneaks effortlessly into sonnets and refuses to call iambic pentameter an archaic formula.

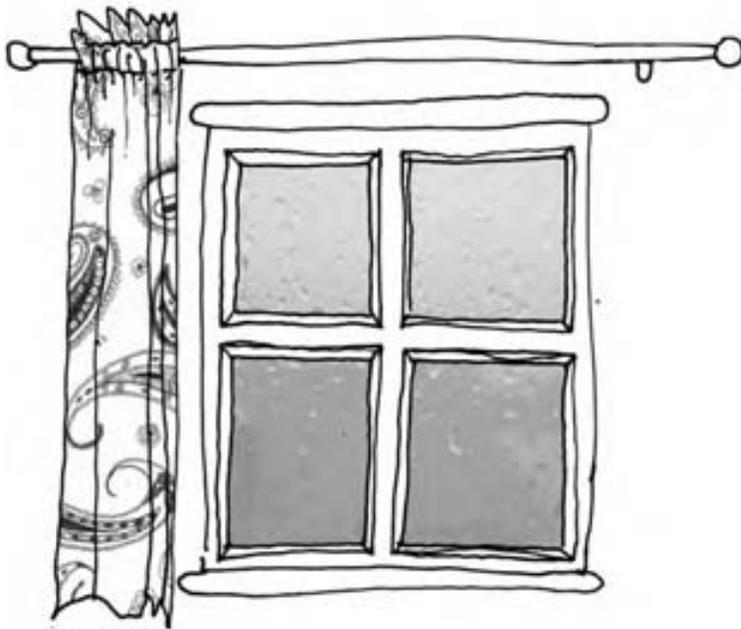
It is as through rhythm and rhyme in most of his poems make a way out of his brain, and it is this same phonetic property that helps him brush off any imperfections when he reads them out loud.

“In front of an audience, a poem's chaff becomes obvious. Public readings are an excellent threshing tool. All the dumb, boring, show-offy stuff becomes evident,” said Trotter in an interview on Canadian poet rob mcLennan's blog. “During readings, I edit on the fly.”

Beyond the sonorous quality comes the subject matter, which is an unusual coalition of memory and illusion, and a valiant attempt to render them tangible. His poems, as if they had a life of their own, are merely canals connecting a flowing and flexible stream of consciousness.

His airy style alludes to fictitious landscapes as much as it does to a “weightless, insubstantial, ordinary mortality”—and language serves to connect the dots between these. In this panorama, it is nature in all its immensity that fills the void.

Don't be surprised if you feel the spirit of e.e. cummings run-



“Windows of likely rain. Windows with not fact/Windows of mild applause. It moves us not ...” GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

ning and jumping through Trotter's poems, for there is a lot of material with as much comparable confusion and potential in here.

Stay tuned for Trotter's upcoming public readings in Montreal sponsored by Biblioasis this March.



Joshua Trotter
All This Could Be Yours
Biblioasis Books
80 pp
\$18.95

Lit Events

Irving Layton Award Finalists Reading

Concordia Students Short-listed for the Poetry and Fiction Prizes for the 2011 Irving Layton Award Read From Their Submissions

MARCH 11
5:00 P.M. TO 7:00 P.M.
THE EV BUILDING, ROOM EV
11.725, 1515 STE
CATHERINE ST. W.
FREE ADMISSION AND WINE

THE VOID's New Issue Launch Party

Concordia Lit Mag Celebrates “The Hunt,” Its Latest Issue. Featuring Readings by Contributors and Music by Makeout Videotape

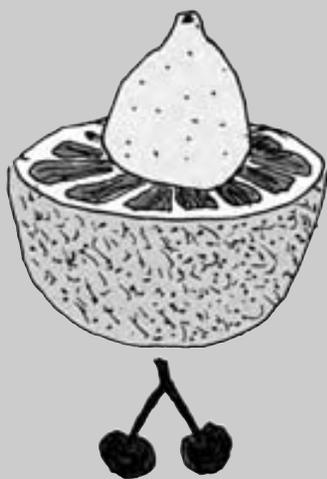
MARCH 11
8:00 P.M. TO 3:00 A.M.
185 VAN HORNE AVE,
APARTMENT 5
ADMISSION \$5 AT THE DOOR

SPLIT WRITS

An Assortment of Short Poems

• NICOLE FU

Dalliance,
Is that what this is?
Dalliance,
3 months and counting.
That's certainly not brief—
Dalliance.
That's why I don't know
your friends?
Dalliance.
Quick, before I get too attached.



• LIZY MOSTOWSKI

Lemon-cleanse.
Grapefruit-diet.
My hymen won't grow back.

• ASHLEY OPHEIM

Dear Internet,
Our relationship is changing.
You know all my passwords.

• ERICA HELMSLEY

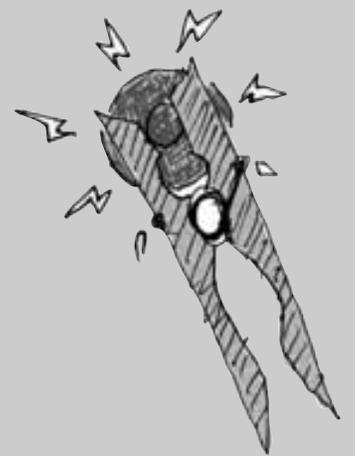
Superimpose a rose over it.
Poetic prose and Eros, solder it.

Ford the red river and a brook, soldier on.

Prosaic close to a book, hold your tongue.

• GABRIELLE STEINBERGER

Ouch—
My nipples.



GRAPHICS ALEX MANLEY

Concerning *Links* & Literature

An Open Letter from the Lit Arts Editor About the Future of the Section

Dear People Interested in the Literary Arts Section of *The Link*,

I have some grim news. Next year there will be no Lit section. (!) *Requiescat in Pace.*

As part of a planned revamp to the paper, Literary Arts is being merged into Fringe Arts, which is being split into two sections: Arts, which will be online, and Culture, which will be in print, and will be the slightly-more-Lit-focused one.

I feel this merits coverage since none of the paper's other four current sections—News, Features, Fringe, Sports or Opinions—are having their mandates deleted or lessened, and in most cases, those mandates are being expanded to a degree that requires not one, but two editors. Literary Arts is simply a casualty of numbers: *The Link* won't have enough money to pay all those new masthead members (it barely has enough to pay the 14 we have now) without cuts being made somewhere.

Though *The Link* will continue to cover stories of a literary bent—in fact, the Culture editor will be mandated to do so to the tune of at least one piece a week—there will no longer be an editor tasked solely with generating literature-based content, nor will there be a

single section devoted to it and only it.

Will *The Link's* coverage of the Concordia/Montreal/Canadian lit scene suffer? That's largely up to you, the readers, to decide, frankly. Beyond his or her own skill-set, available time to devote, and stick-to-itiveness, an editor's production depends on both the quality and the quantity of his/her contributors and staff.

So: If you have any interest in the future of literature coverage—not just in *The Link*, but in publications generally, you should get involved, pronto.

The Link functions as a paper in its own right, but it also acts as a training ground and jumping-off point for Concordia students interested in pursuing careers in journalism. The less *The Link* covers literature, the fewer people leave Concordia with actual experience in covering literature



GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

in a journalistic context, the fewer people actually end up covering any literature out there in the world of journalism itself. Already,

but it is certainly easier to do if there is no one both interested and qualified covering it.

If the idea of contributing sto-

newspapers across the country are cutting their books and literature sections down, if not out altogether.

Books sections aren't sexy. Poets don't generate advertising revenue. Short story collection reviews don't move copies out the door. The power of literature is nice and all, but Nabokov and Joyce and Woolf themselves couldn't drive up subscription numbers if you brought them back from the dead and taught them how to use a phone-headset. We can't prevent literature coverage from being largely eroded from the mainstream media,

ries based in and around literature—both print and digital, both local and national—sounds interesting to you—and remember, reviewing books means you get a free copy of what you review, interviewing an author means you get a free experience of talking to a real-live famous (maybe) person, and people who contribute to four or more issues a semester are eligible for a small financial compensation for their effort—then get in touch with *The Link* ASAP. Getting some good practice in over the next few weeks will go a long way towards easing the transition and making sure the Culture editor has interested, practiced, willing and competent Lit nerds at her disposal. My email, which will remain operational for the next three weeks, is lit@thelinknewspaper.ca

The Lit section may be on its way out, but there will remain events to cover, books to review, authors to chat up, and new writing to be written. So get them fingers tappin' and those cursors clickin' on the "Send" button.

Bittersweet cheers from your ever logorrhic Literary Arts Editor.

—Alex Manley
Literary Arts Editor

EXHAUSTION,
CROWDS,
TEAR GAS,
BATONS,
BEING TARGETED.

Reporting from Protests

A workshop with *The Link's* Editor-in-Chief
Friday, March 11 at 4:00 p.m. H649



the
WOMEN'S
ISSUE



Page 4 & 5

Women's Spaces, Specialized Dates:

What is significant about March 8? Who is included in this cultural calendar day and what problems does this specialization impose on the rest of the year? Jessica Young and Alexandra Blair challenge the celebration.

Page 6, 7 & 10

Women in Print, Women in Tech:

Three writers explore technological, industrialized and traditionally male-dominated workspaces in the search for alternatives.

Page 11

On Manly Feminism:

How male feminists navigate gender politics and identity.

Page 12

Drag, Fundraising and Feminism:

How Queens—in their fabulous, exaggerated feminine glory—have become beacons for women's rights.

What images come to mind when one thinks of "women?" How does one create a visual theme for a decidedly feminist issue that is both graphically pleasing while expressing the essence of women?

These were the challenges presented to us in the task of finding a suitable aesthetic to enhance the pages of this special issue. We started our process of exploration by thinking of all of the images that we associate with women, and soon realized the extent to which these ideas, images, and symbols varied from person to person.

We found it impossible to solve this problem with a specific symbol that ad-

equately represents women to everyone, and found it was very difficult to create this visual discourse about women without actually showing the female figure.

Increasingly drawn to the idea of a feminine curve, we decided that this contour could provide us a graphic shape that could define the feeling we wanted to express in this issue.

As we progressed we took this idea even further, eventually finding that creating interplay between fabric and form could enhance our attempt at female representation, with its organic rhythms and gestures. The use of fabric also provided us with the means of designing consistency from page to page, often ex-

pressing how a feeling of the feminine could be felt without having to actually show it.

Also acting as a thread between the physical body and the social issues surrounding women, we spent a fair amount of time debating whether or not to show an actual model, or to revert to more of a graphic representation of it. With the fabric, we attempted to achieve both, at times experimenting with the possibility of using simplified shapes rather than photographs. We felt that this would maintain a spirit of openness similar to the attitude we encouraged in discussing women's issues.

Ultimately, we decided it would be

more effective to portray the actual body, though we understand that it may be a challenging or contested form, depending on your interpretation of, identification or lack thereof, with it.

The entire process of putting together the women's special issue has been a huge learning experience for all of us on the production team. The narrative we've attempted to create here is an artistic effort to understand how the female form politicizes our visual space.

We have learned a great deal about the issues concerning women's space, and the great diversity in how women see themselves in it.

—Laura Beeston & David Barlow-Krelina



Women's Pages, Women's Places

The Link's Annual Women's Issue

What comes to mind when you think about “women,” “women’s issues” and feminine space?

These were the questions at the heart of this year’s Women’s Issue, a place where *The Link* devotes particular attention to acknowledging, exploring and creating dialogue about the continued challenges—and celebrations—of women in the world today.

Sitting down to brainstorm for this edition, we asked ourselves what role feminism continues to play in our lived experiences, politics, philosophy and culture. We asked ourselves what spaces women engage with or are denied from, how the feminine is represented and presented, and how the gender spectrum—with the inclusion of trans, drag, male, intersex and queer identities—challenges the very essence of woman and female consciousness.

In this dialogue, we found that these questions beget other questions, the concepts overlapped and interplayed, the deconstruction allowed for reconsideration, and the exchange continues.

What are women’s issues? And why should they matter?

Today, March 8, is International Women’s Day, a time committed to this discourse, and to taking a closer look at the spaces around us and the women within them.

It’s a time to reflect on how the contours of femininity and feminism engage our understanding of the world and of ourselves. It’s about moving beyond essentialism, understanding engendered realities and about creating community and conversation.

The Link continues to write and devote room for women specifically in our volume each year because women’s spaces are important for everyone as we move towards a greater understanding about social justice issues and systems of power.

In her seminal 1975 work “Sorties,” French feminist Hélène Cixous discusses the power and poignancy of *Écriture féminine*—translated literally into “women’s writing”—arguing that it offers a vessel to coexistence, and to the development of new attitudes and relationships between self

and other.

“Today, writing is woman’s,” she writes. “Writing is the passageway, the entrance, the exit, the dwelling place of the other in me—the other that I am and am not, that I don’t know how to be, but that I feel passing, that makes me live—that tears me apart, disturbs me, changes me, who? A feminine one, a masculine one, some? Several, some unknown, which is needed, what gives me the desire to know and from which all life soars. This peopling gives neither rest nor security, always disturbs the relationship to ‘reality.’ [...] Writing is working; being worked; questioning between letting oneself be questioned.”

The visibility, commemoration, understanding and analysis of women in these pages, in this university, in this city and in this world today—and everyday—is significant as we continue to relate and respond to the spaces we occupy together.

Happy Women’s Day,

—*Laura Beeston & David Barlow-Krelina,*
Women’s Issue Coordinators.





Taking

• JESSICA YOUNG &
ALEXANDRA BLAIR

Every year, March 8 is supposed to break open a day for women. For 24 hours, the word “women” carries more weight, women’s voices sound a little louder and their presence isn’t only felt—it’s demanded. March 8 is International Women’s Day, and somehow this means that, for 24 hours, women deserve our attention.

Focusing our attention on women in this way generally means that we celebrate and recognize women for their achievements and point to specific individuals as inspirational. There is something valuable about these kinds of celebrations, which is why we go through the same motions for events like Black History Month and World AIDS Day. But what perspective can we possibly gain about the struggles women continue to face if we restrict our attention to one day a year?

Our penchant for setting aside days, weeks or even whole months to acknowledge particular groups and causes is really a question of space. It’s about the way space is constructed, promoted and policed. On March 8, it’s a question of women and space, so what does this event uncover? What is it about giving women space that makes this day political?

It’s important to keep in mind that terms like “women” and

“space” are loaded and ambiguous at best. Their usage and the symbolism that they call to mind can change drastically, sometimes irrevocably, from person to person. It also matters how we qualify these terms, since the stakes of conversation change when we move from talking about women as some generic group to talking about racialized women, working women, queer women, mothers, teenage girls—or combinations thereof?

We won’t all think about women or spaces in the same ways, so nothing about these discussions can ever be all encompassing—we can’t speak for all women, and we can’t speak about all spaces. But with that said, IWD is still a useful venue for discussion, particularly about the many different ways there are to think about who benefits, or who faces the consequences, in occupying a certain space.

Since speaking about the experience of all women is impossible, it might be useful to make a substitution here. The idea of “the university” provides an interesting example for understanding how space operates. Given that most of us spend significant amounts of time on campus spaces, we are all capable of talking about them, though what we are able to say is often limited by the fact that universities operate as very specific and exclusive spaces.

But let’s be critical about classrooms and hallways, university fa-

Up Space

Why International Women's Day Should Be 365 Days a Year

cilities, departments and specializations. Let's realize what these spaces permit, prohibit or punish. Let's look around and ask who is missing from the university, and then let's ask ourselves why we've been allowed in.

Physical spaces are easy to imagine, but if we move beyond the concepts of walls and buildings, March 8 gives us a reason to think through other possibilities, allowing us to examine how space is constructed—through time and place, as power.

Getting Specialized (Aren't You Special!)

The ways we designate and enforce space, in theory, function no differently than the way students are required to specialize in university with a system of minor and major concentrations that dictate not only what we are learning and from whom, but how we are engaging with ideas.

The benefits of specializing are understood as an increased chance of grad school acceptance after university, or the ability to find a job that will pay you more. It can also mean we get to call ourselves experts based on what we've learned. The time we spend in university spaces literally makes us more valuable; we are somehow more special for having specialized.

But to be critical of the university as a space that makes this possible, we are required take a step back and look at who has access to specialize.

University study means tuition, textbooks and time. If you don't have access to the resources that make it possible, you won't have access to the spaces where academic learning takes place, or the benefits of specialization.

IWD takes up space in a very similar way. What's important about IWD is that it is a day where women's issues are made extremely visible—literally being brought to the street. But that said, a lot of voices still aren't heard. The equation seems to look like this: having a space translates into having a voice, and having a voice means having legitimacy. All of this is bound up in access.

What we forget is that not everyone has access to all spaces, and that means there are voices we will never hear on IWD, or events like it that work to give access, however temporary, to the people and issues so often left out.

So how are we—as students or women or just people with access and a voice—supposed to extend these conversations? How can we make space for more voices? How can we extend the dialogue around IWD across the rest of the calendar year?

365 Days of Space

Bringing these issues outside of the spaces that allow us to feel comfortable is hard. Part of the process requires we recognize how much space we take up, which can mean understanding that your voice si-

lences another.

In university spaces, this can be especially challenging. For so many of us, post-secondary education is thought of as an expected next-step and not a privilege that absorbs exorbitant amounts of time and money. The pressure to remain critical of your own position is often lost under the speed of a semester's deadlines.

The shortsightedness is insufficient. Why does it take a tuition rally for people to realize that education is inaccessible? Why does it take IWD for people to pay attention to the position of women? Critiquing your own position is the only way to understand that we are at once benefiting from the privileges of having access to space, and that our privileged access is always taking space away from others.

For us, this is the difference between accountability and responsibility, which is mirrored in the promotion of events like IWD. When we celebrate, we are only accounting for the existence of a struggle. We name these struggles, and we name them as important enough to warrant honouring—though that doesn't ensure we are engaging with them.

When we celebrate, and when we limit that celebration to a single day, we often bypass the potential for any kind of real change. Being responsible demands that we commit to doing something to promote change. Being responsible means working through these challenges 365 days a year.

So, if the goals of IWD are to celebrate women and their achievements within fields like fashion, business, industry and politics, then the goals are being met. But celebrating IWD in so many ways legitimizes the erasure of women who struggle during the other 364 days of the year.

Setting, or resetting, the terms of our own engagement in exclusive spaces can be difficult to do. We are given so little space for being critical to begin with, that it's hard to refuse it when it is offered. Sometimes the space comes in the classroom, sometimes it's in a newspaper article, sometimes it is literally taken to the streets, but no space is beyond compromise. We need to begin reimagining our critical responsibility, and in doing so, we can start reimagining the spaces we occupy.

Perhaps our built environment would look different. Maybe the posters up in our hallways would feature different images. Maybe universities would replace majors and minors with other requirements of learning. Maybe universities wouldn't exist at all. Maybe IWD wouldn't be the only day we mark in our calendars for women.

There are ways we can stop taking up space in a way that takes space away from others, ways for us to become responsible enough to move over and make some room.

But the first step, perhaps, is to stop being satisfied with paying attention for only one day a year.

Young Women and the Web

• ANDREA ZOELLNER

When it comes to media and pop culture, girls are experts. As the target of most media messages, young women are uniquely positioned to understand and criticize the popular culture they are so much a part of.

Feminists from our mothers' and grandmothers' generations are lamenting the absence of feminist discourse in the younger generations. But it really hasn't disappeared—it's just moved online!

Rosel Kim, who has a masters in English literature and cultural studies, is an avid blogger and contributor to Kickaction.ca, an online community of young women who think for themselves, take a stand and act creatively to bring positive change across the globe. She believes the Internet can be a terrifying and horrible place full of hate

and prejudice, but that is also a place of enormous potential and progressive politics.

"It's much more interactive and pluralistic than the printed page because it offers the possibility of instantaneous feedback," she said. "By providing a podium for women artists working in various mediums and places through blogging, I want to create an expansive community for women to share their artistic endeavours and shatter the 'lone genius' masculinist model of the singular artist."

Young women are not simply passive consumers of the media, as many critically read and actively subvert it through online communities and personal blogs. By using web technologies, many women reinvent media and pop culture on their own terms and explode the borders of what's conventionally offered to them.

Pop culture sends limiting messages about young women's identities, their potential and what matters to them, and the media loves to sensationalize, victimize and create panic around girls and young women. Effective critiques need to look at the many facets of these issues, but media doesn't exist in a bubble and the same issues—sexism, racism, ageism, classism and homophobia—that affect girls, affect it.

And yet we rarely hear young women's voices on the subject. Blogging is changing this. More and more young women are media savvy and understand, interact and respond to media and pop culture in dynamic and complex ways.

Young women are finding new ways of getting their voices heard, developing their potential to express themselves and becoming

opinion leaders whether it's about women's rights, politics or social justice.

"I blog because it can be a powerful mobilizing tool for bringing feminist voices together, as well as an effective outreach resource for those who may not have easy access to other feminist voices," said Kim.

Kim, along with many others, will be part of Kickaction.ca's fourth annual Blogging Carnival.

Starting March 8—International Women's Day—Kickaction.ca will be a place for bloggers to converge on one site and discuss issues they care about. For the month-long Blogging Carnival, more than 6,000 young women will share stories and opinions about topics such as immigration, sexual identity, consent, gender, art, cyberspace and much more.

Printed Minority

07WOMEN'S

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Female Bylines Marginal in Magazines and It's Up to Editors to Change That

• MADELINE COLEMAN

I'd always assumed women writers were getting a raw deal, but every time I noticed the odd Anna, Megan or Sarah among a magazine's bylines, I took it as a sign that things had changed. Women are writing, I reassured myself, and they're being published. There's nothing to be worried about.

I was wrong.

Last month, VIDA, a US-based grassroots organization that focuses on women in the literary arts, published a series of disturbing pie charts showing how many women were published in major American magazines last year. The Count, as they called it, showed disturbingly low numbers of female writers in literary and general interest publications: 24 per cent at the *Atlantic*, 21 per cent at *Harper's*, 14 per cent at the *New York Review of Books*. *The New Yorker*, widely regarded in the English-speaking world as an exemplar of fine writing, weighed in at an abysmal 26 per cent.

VIDA also broke it down between book reviewers and the authors whose work was being reviewed.

The results were equally discouraging.

A cursory glance around a Concordia journalism class will confirm that women are indeed going to journalism school. In fact, women have made up the majority of Canadian journalism graduates for the past decade. Not all writers are J-school graduates, of course, but you get the idea: women are writing, and they want to do it for a living.

While no one has done such a thorough study of Canadian magazines, I'd be surprised if our numbers are much better. So what the hell is going on?

The difficulties of being a woman in the newsroom are well known in journalism circles. Female reporters have, historically, battled machismo both in print and broadcasting. What's less reported—and what the VIDA numbers bring to light—is that magazines can be equally tough to crack.

Long-form journalism gives more room for reflection, argument and critique. Women deserve an equal shot at this space, and not just in women-targeted magazines. The issue isn't that women can't write well enough; the problem is that major general interest magazines are stuck in a cycle of maleness.

The small number of women getting published in big magazines has a lot to do with lazy editors. While editors might protest that their priority is always great writing, no matter who the writer is, this is a fucking dire situation.

Editors can be slaves to reputation. If they recognize a writer's name, they are much more likely to take his or her pitch seriously. A new writer needs not only a great story idea, but also an editor who's willing to take a leap of faith. If editors do not take the time to seek out promising female writers and fall back, instead, on the same roster of male writers they've always used, then the numbers stay skewed.

Male writers have been in the spotlight for so long, it's often assumed that the term "writer" refers to a man unless specified otherwise. We might say that someone is a "female journalist," but the only time most of us will specify that someone is a man is if, well, he's a nurse.

"While women are constantly reminded that their views are only partial," pointed out *Slate* writer Katha Pollitt in response to the VIDA controversy, "men have the luxury—in life as in grammar—of thinking they represent humanity, tout court."

When magazine editors assume that they're getting the best writers possible, and that all of them just happen to be male, they reveal a pretty pathetic lack of imagination.

So what can we do about it? First, a Canadian team must undertake the same task that VIDA did so we have a comprehensive picture of the situation on this side of the border. Next, magazine editors need to make gender equity a priority, not an afterthought. It's easy to say women are good enough writers, the system will fix itself—but why wait for that to happen? Why not devote, as one feminist editor has suggested, a mere 20 minutes a day to looking for and reaching out to talented female writers? They're out there, and finding them is not a chore. It's an investment in your magazine's future.

Last week on the metro, I eavesdropped on the conversation of two college-aged guys sitting across from me. One of them was explaining to the other—no joke—what patriarchy was.

"Wait," said his friend, "is our society a patriarchy?" I couldn't help but notice the copy of *The New Yorker* peeking out of his unzipped backpack.

Imagining the Veil

Muslim Women in Global Contemporary Art

• GISELLE MACDONALD

“The veil is on the wrong side in the ideology of modernity. It stands for backward tradition as opposed to progress, misogyny as opposed to female emancipation, totalitarianism as opposed to democracy, superstition as opposed to science, and so on.”

These were some of the words that echoed from postdoctoral fellow Valerie Behiery at Concordia’s Simone de Beauvoir Institute during their Feminist Café speakers series March 2.

Discussing the depiction of the veil in contemporary art, Behiery—who is working towards a doctorate at the Centre d’études eth-

niques des universités Montréalaises, a research centre for ethnic studies based at the Université de Montréal—is one of the few scholars that have submerged themselves in this subject in order to challenge the stereotypes of Muslim women and Islam.

Though it has been deconstructed in various academic disciplines, from sociology, to anthropology, postcolonial studies, women studies and even fashion studies, Behiery explained that not much work has been undertaken looking at the meanings and the functions of the veil in contemporary art.

But a sudden burgeoning of veils in the scene, she said, may be credited to the

factors of globalization and a notable increase of non-Western artists and the expansion of an art scene throughout the Muslim world.

At the talk, Behiery examined the discrepancy between the images of the veil that are brought forward in contemporary art and those that are still found in mainstream media culture.

Sadly, she said, the veil in the West still stands for the woman who is oppressed, acting as sort of a “visual shorthand” for all of the things that the West associates with Islam and the Muslim world—a symbol which is seen and perceived as the antithesis of the Western emancipated woman.

“It is a very simplistic worldview,” she said. “Either you’re an oppressed Muslim woman or you’re an emancipated female.”

Despite this, she said, the veil in contemporary art helps to redefine the faux concept of the veil—reshaping the world in step with other changes, such as the rise of non-Western superpowers, the fact that there’s a growing awareness that we all have complex and plural identities, and the increasing “transnationalization” of identities in a growing globalized world.

The veil, she said, is increasingly being used to remap our identities and conceptions of the world. It reminds us “we’re no

longer in ‘the West and the rest’ sort of paradigm,” she said, “[but that] we live in a pluralist world.”

Uncovering the possible spaces of communication, Behiery said that the image of the veil in contemporary art “offers tools that will help us redefine our cultural screen and collective filter—and also our collective identities. [Its presence resonates] in a way that it’s more coordinated with our contemporary realities.”

The SDBI’s next Feminist Café takes place March 23rd with Lillian Robinson Scholar M.J. Thompson from 1:30- 2:30 p.m. in MU 101. For more information, check out wsdb.concordia.ca



“A Woman’s Mind Isn’t Made for Programming”

Women Struggle to Close Gender Gap in the Tech Community

• JULIA WOLFE

A few weeks ago, I was taking a cab to the airport. Like me, the driver was a programmer, so we started talking about our favourite languages and sharing some of our own projects.

After about 10 minutes, he paused thoughtfully. “So you must be really smart,” he said. “A woman’s mind isn’t made for programming.”

I rarely experience sexism that overt, but women in tech face varying degrees of it all the time. After all, according to the Computing Research Association, women are responsible for less than 12 per cent of computer science degrees in the United States. So it’s no wonder some people assume it’s genetic.

But the women behind the Montreal chapter of Girl Geeks, Alexandra Dao and Georgiana Laudi, disagree.

The group, which finds women experts to come speak on a variety of tech and feminism related topics, meet once a month. And while they’re acutely aware of tech’s gender gap (Dao is the only female employee at her startup), they’re confident this is a nurture-over-nature situation.

“Tech seems to come a little bit easier to guys just because it’s nurtured from a younger age,” Laudi said. “The girl in computer science feels intimidated by her classmates, who have

been on a computer since they were twelve.”

This, both agree, is a problem specific to North America.

Many Asian and Middle Eastern countries treat computer science as a women’s field because it’s a job with no manual labour. In fact, Dao pointed out, in countries like Malaysia, women actually dominate the field.

Tina Salameh, who is double majoring in computer science and computation arts at Concordia, feels it’s also the environment of the tech community that may alienate women even further.

“Tech is a meritocracy. It’s like ‘Read the fucking manual or get the fuck out,’” Salameh said. “Women are gentler than that.” Like many fields, Salameh added, women also often fall behind if they decide to have children.

As part of a small minority, women in tech also seem to feel the need to consistently prove themselves, especially those in the more stereotypical female fields. Laudi, a freelance web marketer, said this is something that often bothers her at tech events. She hates people making her feel like “just another marketing girl,” which she said happens a lot.

“Do guys getting MBAs feel bad when they go to tech events and say they’re in business?” Dao asked.

“No,” said Laudi, adding that men don’t have to explain themselves at

tech events, since their gender does that for them.

But Salameh thinks that’s just the nature of the field. Tech is competitive, she said, and everyone has to prove themselves.

“Men in tech, they look at me and they talk down to me. But that was at first. Eventually, you get your skills together,” she said.

Laudi and Dao think the gap may finally be closing, just very slowly. Social media, they agree, allows women to connect with the tech community in a non-threatening way.

“It’s easy to get involved [in social media], and become a little more visible,” Dao said. “It’s easier to sort of self-select people that you have things in common with.”

This, Dao added, might help with another major drawback for women interested in tech.

“You need to have mentors,” she said.

In the workplace, Dao’s noticed that men are working towards a more balanced office as well. They need women—who are part of their target market—to help create a gender friendly project. “The more diverse your team is, you’re always going to have a better program in the end,”

Dao said. “It benefits everyone.”

These changes, Laudi says, might also start to affect the culture of raising children.

“The next generation of mothers is going to be like us,’ she said. “We’re going to nurture tech and that way of life just as much in little girls as little boys.”

She’s optimistic, but doesn’t expect much real change to occur in the immediate future. “Maybe in ten years a need for [Girl Geeks] won’t exist anymore,” she said. “Maybe in 20.”

And for now? “There is definitely a demand.”





Manly Feminism

On Men Who Embrace the Movement

• ALEX MANLEY

It's hard to grow up as a gangly, awkward, anti-social nerd with a last name like Manley and not develop a very acute consciousness of gender roles in North American culture. So, despite never having taken a course on gender studies, I feel like a bit of an amateur student thereof.

I'm an avowed feminist. And I've heard guys say they're feminists before, which is encouraging, but I hear it less often than I hear girls tell me they're not feminists, or try to put conditions on their feminism, like—"I consider myself a feminist, but I feel like a lot of these women go too far; they're too combative."

It is difficult to feel like you spend more time thinking or caring about the struggle of women's rights than a woman herself—any woman at all—let alone a lot of them.

And yet, there doesn't seem to be a generally accepted consciousness, even among university-going young people, that feminism isn't over. That there remains, in the world and in North America, a slanted playing field; a glass ceiling. You can't simply gender-flip any given situation and have the pieces land flatly and neatly.

Those frustrations are things that face female feminists too, though. But here are some of the things that are endemic to male-feminism:

First, you have to be on your guard all the time. You are constantly encountering women that you are in a position to scare, stress out or worry. You need to do your best to avoid making this happen. When you are about to catch up to a woman walking on a

sidewalk late at night, cross the street. When you are using public transportation, out of courtesy, indicate that you're getting off at your stop as early as possible, so you don't give anyone cause to think you're following them. Don't stare at people. Don't approach girls you don't know unless it's absolutely necessary. Don't talk to women after dark. Things like that.

Nevertheless, it's hard to be, well, a guy if you're constantly looking out primarily for women's rights, and I imagine this drives a not-insignificant percentage of men away from the concept. Men are willing to accept, in principle, ideas like the equality of men and women, but in practice, a dominant class of people cannot be or become equal with an underprivileged group without the former making serious concessions to the rights of the latter.

And then it becomes—"Well, I've never raped a woman; I've never hit a woman; I've never cheated on a woman; why should I have to put a woman's rights, her sense of comfort or emotional well-being before mine?"

For some reason, the same principle isn't as hard to grasp with regards to race relations; you don't get many white people claiming they should be able to continue subjugating black people simply because they themselves had never worn a white hood or participated in a lynching.

That sort of comparison may sound drastic, but male violence against women is hardly limited to black eyes after drunken arguments. Men are quick to throw around terms like "man-hating feminist" at women who take their rights seriously and who vo-

cally object to the patriarchy, but I don't think it's unfair to suggest that a significant percentage of men in our society are threatened by the progress of women's rights—and ten points to you if you can remember the last time a woman resorted to a Polytechnique-style attack on men for perceived gender-based discrimination.

You don't need to look far to see where and how the remaining outposts of our firmly entrenched misogyny are a problem. A simple trip outdoors on a Friday night will yield myriad encounters with these problem children, these lost boys—young men whose visual and psychological identities are built around a desire to seem intimidating. Like the only way to seem worth dating is to be the scariest-looking piece of meat on the market.

Perhaps the problem is our culture suffers from a distinct lack of male-feminist role models. The Don Drapers and the Chris Browns of the world are a dime a dozen, and their followers are, inexplicably, a legion.

To the best of my knowledge, though, there's yet to be a really sexy, openly-feminist male fictional character or celebrity to reach critical pop culture mass awareness, either in throwback-to-the-'50s-manliness terms or in 21st-century-alpha-male terms.

I think, if there's any takeaway from all this, it's that modern men need to start including feminist concerns in their everyday carry. If our identities are things we construct and can shape consciously, then we can start recycling chivalry, which, so far as I know, still retains a certain sexy cachet, into something a little more suited for 2011 and beyond.

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Queen Meaning

How Drag Queens Advance Women's Rights

• JESSIE MATHIESON

Feminism, fundraising and drag came together March 3 for ¡Ecuador Por Favor!, an event at Cabaret Mado to raise money for the advancement of human rights—specifically those of women.

Cabaret Mado has been a crucial site of gender play and politics since they opened their doors in Montreal's Gay Village in 2002. Playing an important role in advancing Montreal's own brand of sexual revolution, the venue has made a name for itself. While opening up space for drag queens to express themselves and, as the fundraising night demonstrates—to give back to the community.

Alternatives Montreal, an international organization striving for sustainable, democratic, social and economic development, hosted the drag show to finance the creation of documentary films on women's right in Ecuador, beginning in June.

Anouk Renaud, one of the Alternatives' interns, said that the documentaries would be made in collaboration with the local youth, and that the films will concern women's rights, specifically the integration of women into the workforce and equality within the family. The group also plans on leaving some topics "up in the air" to be developed from the volunteers' experiences in Ecuador.

Renaud, who was a fan of the venue before it hosted Alternatives, said they chose to have their event at Cabaret Mado because the venue reserves Thursday nights for charity shows to support organizations such as hers. It is very accessible and easy, as the show is organized for them by the cabaret.

Throughout the performance, there were appearances from five professionals on the Montreal drag scene: Dream, Marla Deer, Peggy Sue, Sandra and Gisèle Lullaby.

Proudly considering herself a feminist, Lullaby said she was happy to be performing for this specific cause. She said that women's rights movement is far from over, as they "have not quite made it to the point where they should be today."

Lullaby said she sees a connection between drag and women's rights, explaining, "We represent the strong women, the beautiful women, the affirmed women and the women of all the sauces."

Adding that the queens aim to represent many sides of women—particularly characterizing the powerful and provocative—, Lullaby said that drag artists explore characters who are strong-minded, [and] who speak out for themselves, as well as the "sexy Gucci girls" of the world.

Lullaby came on stage for her first performance baring more skin than she covered. Her choreography was nothing short of alluring and suggestive. At one point she even locked lips with an excited member of the audience, much to both of their delight.

Lullaby said she always loved to dance and perform. She began working with drag queens at Cabaret Mado five years ago, after graduating from dance school and working some professional gigs.

With some friends in the business, Lullaby made the leap into drag on her birthday three years ago—impressing her audience, most notably Mado La Motte, owner and founder of Cabaret Mado. With an encouraging push from the queen of the Montreal queens, Lullaby said she "threw [herself] out there, and, since then, it's been going very well."

Lullaby and other drag queens represent a growing group of what academics and feminist thinkers call "transfeminists"—social activists who have broadened the agenda of feminism to include transgendered and transsexual individuals.

This evolution, which incorporates queer theory, as well as feminism, represents an ever-evolving and expanding definition of sexuality and gender. Lullaby's views fall into the transfeminist ideology.

"Women should not be completely independent, but equal," she said, declaring her support for a style of feminism that is no longer exclusively about advancing women, but something that strives for equality and acceptance of all gender variants.



ART MATTERS: ANDREW WK BRINGS THE PARTY TO CONCORDIA

"Every Corner of the Room"

Local Folk Singer David Simard Wants More From the Stage



Shannon Collier performs aerials to David Simard and co. PHOTO AND VIDEO JULIA JONES

• PETER MURRAY

Smoke twists and twirls through the air of a dimly lit, wood-paneled room. The hollow acoustic instruments seem an elaborate extension of the floor and walls. The melody of the space blends into itself and a voice guides you down a hallway. This is one of the many atmospheres woven by the songs of David Simard.

Simard, a local folk-singer-songwriter, creates songs that evoke all the form and poetry of folk music coupled with all the gritty macabre and visceral carass of voodoo blues.

Originally from Prince Rupert, B.C., Simard first cut his musical teeth on the Peterborough, Ontario circuit, where he received the 2007 Emerging Artist Award at the Peterborough

Folk Festival.

Since his move to Montreal in the blustery winter of 2007, Simard has been crafting an honest, unique, cabaret sound while also performing and getting his name out on the folk scene.

The theatrical spectacles Simard mounts have taken him wondering about the country. The tall, dark-eyed troubadour has spread his brand of balladry everywhere between the islands of the west coast to the cliffs of the east.

"I've got a real crush on the East Coast right now," he said, referencing his recent tour through the Maritimes—his third time there in the past year, which included a night at the Stereophonic Music Festival.

"I've had a lot of change in my music in the past little bit," he said. "I feel like I've dwelt in this

kind of passive state for a while here [in Montreal], just trying to figure out what I'm doing and who I'm going to do it with."

Having morphed from primarily solo performances to a full band—including percussion by Daniel Gélinas, double bass by Damon Hankoff, as well as various other collaborators—the characters of Simard's music have fallen into an even more atmospheric live sound.

"Putting the band together has changed everything [in] realizing that there's such a wealth of ideas not coming from my own head," he said. "I really don't have to tell them anything.

Simard's live accompaniment goes beyond just that of musical backup. Collaborators such as aerial silk dancer Shannon Collier and Cirque du Soleil contor-

tionist Andreane Leclerc augment the dark cabaret vibes of live performances.

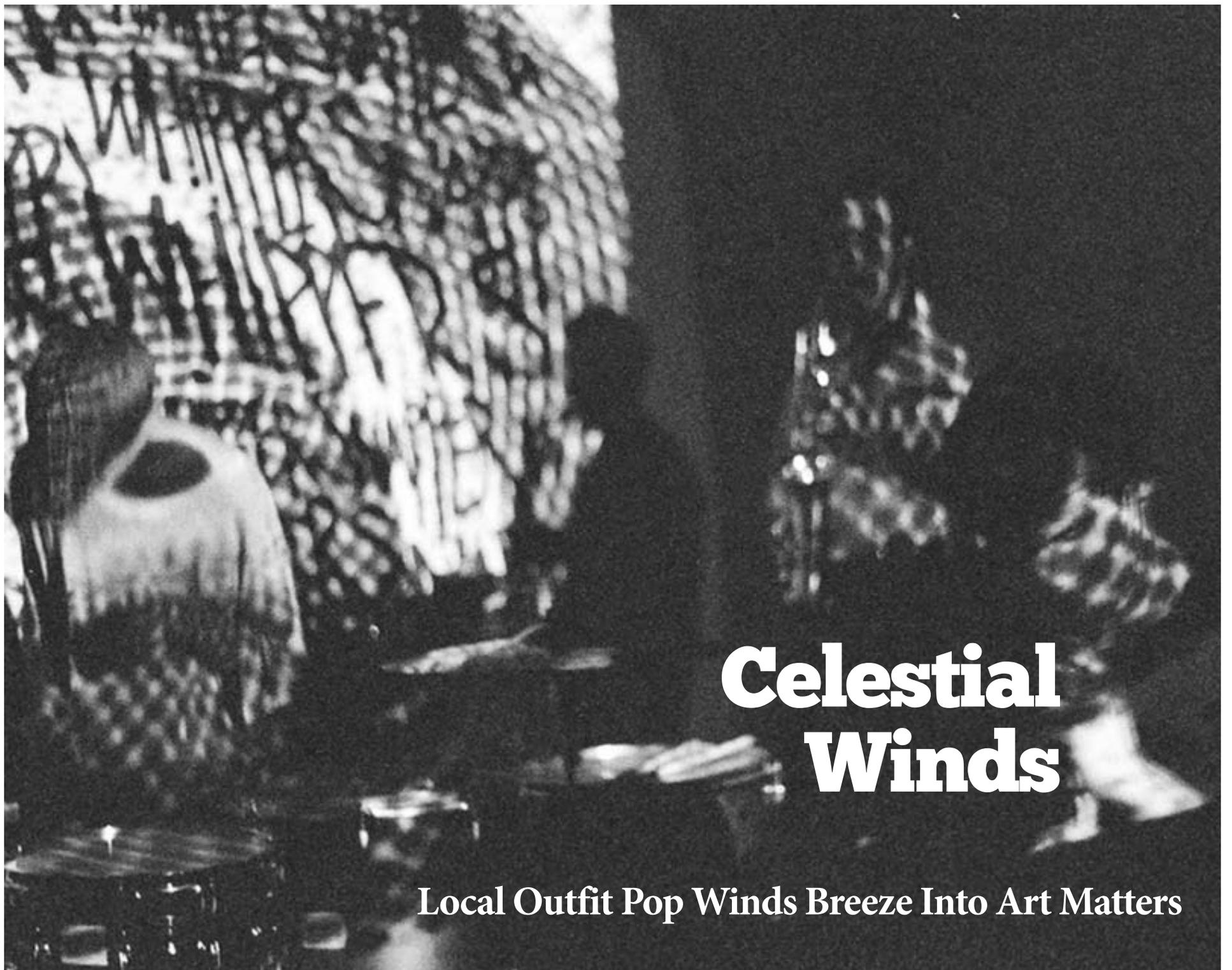
"I've always enjoyed having a show be more of an event," said Simard. "Bringing in analog multimedia [or] the right dancers or physical performers can really tell a story. It really fits well [with folk music]."

"I hate it when the show only happens on stage," Simard added. "It's like there's the audience, the show, and somewhere in between there's the evening. I prefer a full evening happening in every corner of the room."

David Simard / L'Inspecteur L'Épingle / 4051 Saint Hubert St. / Wed. March 9 / 9:00 p.m. / with Jenny Berkel & Antoine Corriveau. \$5 Listen to Simard at: myspace.com/davidsimard-music

See a *The Link* exclusive performance of David Simard's song "Magda" with a performance by aerialist Shannon Collier: thelinknewspaper.ca





Celestial Winds

Local Outfit Pop Winds Breeze Into Art Matters

Pop Winds will play the Frequencies Art Matters show this Wednesday.

PHOTO BRAD CATLEUGH

• CARL ROLOFF

If the Pop Winds were a spaceship they'd look like something out of Thunderbirds, only more practical, silver, and with a porthole for each band member to look out from.

But the Pop Winds aren't a space ship and this is just a cold, wet, March day in the Mile End. The band is equipped with hot coffee, tea and chunky mango smoothies.

All hailing from different parts of Ontario, the band is comprised of Devon Welsh, Austin Milne and Kyle Bennett.

Any proper description of their sound must include the word languid. This is experienced in Welsh's vocals, stretched to their innermost tension. Milne's saxophone is lush and whimsical, subtly weaving in and out of the melody. Bennett, finally, is the artist who carries the bulk of the sound, weaving his vocals and his intricate drum and synth loops to support his band mates' creations. The whole sound is beautiful and slow.

The band formed in late 2009

when roommates Welsh and Milne met up in Montreal with Bennett, and so far they have released the EP *Understory* and a full length, *The Turquoise*.

"After I moved to Montreal for university, I recorded songs on my own for a couple of years and played with some people off and on," said Welsh. "Then Kyle and myself started sending each other songs while he was in London, Ontario going to [university]."

When Bennett transferred to Concordia, the immediacy between Welsh and Bennett allowed them to record together and start up Pop Winds. The band gave themselves a year to flourish before playing their first show.

The band hesitates to identify any distinct influences in their music, content to let such processes be subconscious. They prefer to learn from each other as musicians, letting their ideas blend together organically.

"I think what interests the Pop Winds musically is something that we can play and sink into, feel alive and feel excited playing, and something that feels [natural]," said Welsh. "We're not interested in

stretching to do something that we think sounds cool [...] We're not interested in genre experiments or playing a certain 'kind' of music. We are interested in making and playing what just comes out."

The Pop Winds make a point to play and experiment together every day. Rarely does one member bring a complete song to the table, and even then it gets played with and changed until the resulting piece is a completely different song.

"We challenge each other just by getting together and playing music," said Welsh. "When I make music on my own, or when Kyle does, we are the only judges of what we make. On the other hand, when the three of us meet, everyone needs to be on board for us to continue developing an idea."

All of the band's music can be found online for free. While the band is now signed to Arbutus Records—a local label representing artists such as Grimes, Braids and Blue Hawaii—the philosophy of the label is towards free content as well. Purchasing a CD from them (*The Turquoise* goes for \$5) ends up being more of a symbolic ges-

ture for independent music and independent choice.

The band has toured across Canada in support of *The Turquoise* and they aim to tour the States soon, and maybe, one day, Mexico City.

"Our relationship with music has changed a lot since we started playing together," said Welsh. "But I think the essence of how we do things has always been pretty much the same—we've always made songs out of collaborative/improvised experiences that we thought had a lot of energy and that made sense for us to play."

"In a different sense, our relationship with music has also become more serious. The more you work on music both on your own and with others, the more attention you give to every element of the process, and that's true for us in terms of the songs, their quality in a live setting as well as in a recording, and the distribution of those songs to an audience."

"Along the same lines, I think the three of us appreciate other people's music when it's apparent that it comes from the same place—the music that someone makes

should be coming from a place that's natural for them. Although it sounds cheesy it should come from their heart, in the sense that it shouldn't be contrived or reaching for something in an artificial way," said Welsh. "It should just come out of you, be an expression of you, and continue to express that naturalness when you play it."

Welsh went on to say that the band ditches songs when they no longer feel a connection. "I think it's important to keep a fresh creative process," he said. "If something isn't doing it for you anymore, you should get rid of it."

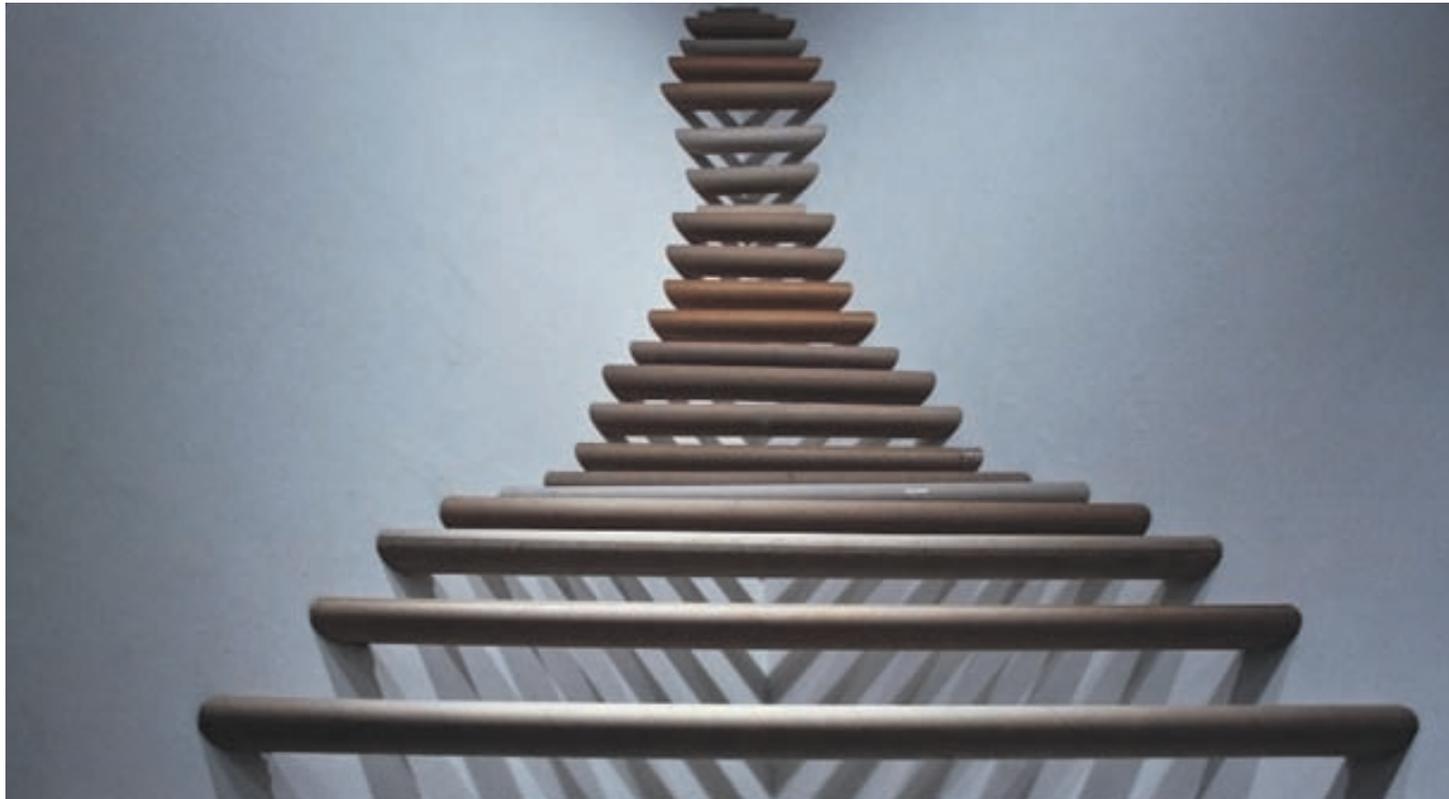
The band will play this week as part of the Art Matters event *Frequencies*, curated by Derek Branscombe. The show will also feature light and video projections from Concordia artists.

Pop Winds at *Frequencies* / La Sala Rossa / 4848 Saint Laurent Blvd. / March 9 / 8:30 p.m. / with fuck fish, Omaha, Sibian & Faun, The Comission and Winderling / FREE

—with files from Ashley Opheim

Transparent Endings

Art Matters Exhibit *PUSH-PULL* Explores the Creation Process as Art



Top: Evan Taurins, Bottom left: Marie-Eve and Maude Emilie Bourque, Bottom right: Jesse Mykolyn and Quentin Mawson. PHOTOS PIERRE CHAUVIN



• CAITLIN LEROUX

We deconstruct the ideas behind text as we read and study it. The process behind tactical pieces of artworks should receive equal attention, according to Art Matters show *PUSH-PULL*, curated by Vivien Leung. The process behind a fascinating piece of work is something that often goes unnoticed and unobserved. In most gallery settings, viewers are limited to the final product. In response, viewers are not provided with the tools to deconstruct the work that goes into the creative process. This is what *PUSH-PULL* attempts to explore.

The show features the finished works and coinciding creative processes of 10 Concordia-based artists at La Galerie ESPACE. The works are varied in medium ranging from

fashion, jewelry, industrial and graphic design, furniture, photography and painting.

PUSH-PULL asks viewers to pay attention to the process behind the work and the balance that is attained through the final product. Viewers are introduced to the scrap sketches, leftover materials, example prototypes and the original ideas that the artists' inspiration stemmed from.

Artist Thea Govorchin is one of the featured painters whose work, entitled "Pouteenage Lust," illustrates an image of nude "babes," as she described them, floating over poutine. Her creative process includes images that lent inspiration to her creative process, including a particular print featured in one of the pieces in the Miu Miu spring 2010 collection

The industrial design and furniture pieces that were

housed in corners, in the open space and on the stages of window displays also included visual explanation behind their production.

Designer Eli Kerr created a chair made of metal and leather, explaining how a balance between the materials was found in a similar fashion to the way that the balance between a zipper and a leather boot is found.

Comparisons such as the latter help explain the thought process that artists experience asking themselves. "How do I find balance between the materials I am working with?" Or, perhaps as seen with Andrew Evan Taurins spatial exploration using cardboard tubes or Pablo Aracenas, graphic design piece, "How do I find the balance between the negative and positive space?"

La Galerie ESPACE was the

perfect venue for such an array of works. The gallery's "in" and "out" door adds to the overall push-pull theme of the exhibition.

Govorchin described the show as "achieving balance, in the way that Vivien displayed the theme in regards to the layout that the space provides."

PUSH-PULL reminds us that the process of creation is just as worthy of display as the final works are—that we should be art literate as we peruse some of the great works of art that are out there.

They have probably taken months of preparation striving to reach a push-pull balance.

***PUSH-PULL* / La Galerie ESPACE / 4844 St. Laurent Blvd. / Now - March 14 / FREE**

A KISS OF DEATH

• ANTONELLA TENORIO

The Closer We are to Death the More We Feel Alive is an art exhibit featured at the student-run festival Art Matters. The exhibition is a collection of multidisciplinary artworks that expose the tension between the dead and the alive—the grotesque and the beautiful.

At first, the gallery is a chaotic array of random objects, but upon closer inspection, the pieces connect thematically.

The dimmed lights of the gallery and the abrupt sound of objects falling around you add to an overall feeling of discomfort in the space.

As one of the main focuses of the show, a video of a decomposing cake entitled "Piece of Me"—created by Jessica Beaulieu—is projected on a large screen in the middle of the room.

"It is a reflection on getting old, feel[ing] the time passing by, gaining new experiences but also losing faculties [and] memories," said Beaulieu.

As the video progresses, the cake becomes uneatable, the candle wax melts and the soundtrack mimics something reminiscent of death.

Mathieu Ball and his work "Dead Pigeons in Wood Shadow Boxes" displays several dead pigeons framed in wood as a reminder that nothing lasts forever.

Vincent G. Rousseau's "When You Wish Upon a Smoke" is a collaborative sculptural piece of Mickey Mouse made entirely out of cigarette butts.

"After the Frost," a piece by Jessica Hebert, is a collection of photographs taken during winter that display a variety of frosty plants in black and white. The piece plays with the strange relationship one has to the natural world during winter.

As part of the exposition, there is an empty room with white canvases and black and white paint available to the public. Viewers are free to go into the room and leave a mark on the walls, creating a collaborative abstract painting.

Although each artwork conveys different ideas of the perished in a way that is almost uncanny, they present a visual burial ground that can be immortalized through art.

As a result, we have a product that celebrates life through decadence; with each artist managing to capture death as an inevitable part of life.

***The Closer We are to Death the More We Feel Alive* / Eastern Bloc / 7240 Clark Ave. / Runs until March 19 / FREE**

Wandering Symphonies

My Dad vs Yours Prepare to Bloom

• COLIN HARRIS

A promising wall of sound is coming out of Ottawa. Instrumental indie quartet My Dad vs Yours have just released their second full length album *Little Symphonies*, a record which guitarist Jose Palacios describes as both nostalgic and uplifting.

The label “post-rock” has often been ascribed to the band due to their layered, instrumental sound, but Palacios doesn't see the quartet's music fitting that subgenre. The description conjures images of the doom and gloom of Godspeed You! Black Emperor, but *Little Symphonies* is nothing of that sort.

“We don't really like the post-rock tag. A lot of people describe it as post-rock, but we want to move away from that,” said Palacios. “In a sense that's why these songs are more pop structured.”

“It's a record that I would have wanted to listen to when I was 20,” said Palacios. “There's a My Bloody

Valentine sound in there, among other sounds that you can pick out. Getting the songs into a pop structure makes it sound a little happier.”

It may be the lack of a vocalist that triggers the de facto tagline, but the band's sound holds plenty of melody without the aid of a singer. The lack of lyrics creates an environment of free association, allowing listeners' thoughts to wander through their soundscapes.

“When you hear it you realize that it doesn't really need vocals,” said Palacios. “I find that can be a lot more powerful too because when you're watching the band and listening to the music, your imagination [can] take over, [and] participate with the music. People can take [the music] to different levels and make it more rewarding.”

From their self-produced releases to the upcoming video for “Happy Wanderer/Carry The Weight,” My Dad vs Yours utilizes

the connections they've made over the last several years to accomplish the tasks required of independent musicians.

Little Symphonies is the result of three years of production. The band is itching to see what kind of response it will get.

“The record was done about a year ago, but because we were doing it ourselves we wanted to shop around for a good deal for pressing vinyl,” said Palacios. “Since it's been done for a while we've just been dying for people to hear it. You're never really sure; I mean I really like it, but you don't know how other people are going to take it.”

The record is certainly their biggest sounding yet. *Little Symphonies* was recorded in Gallery Studios, a recording space in Ottawa co-owned by drummer Arturo Brisindi and Dean Watson, who mixed the record.

Taking their time seems to have paid off, with the result being a joy-

ful, refreshing body of work.

“We've had really great feedback for the record, and it's on a bunch of downloading websites,” said Palacios. “Obviously we'd prefer if people bought the record, but it doesn't really matter to me as long as the word of mouth is spreading.”

And it is. Since its release last month, *Little Symphonies* has attracted attention from promoters in regions the band have never played.

My Dad vs Yours will embark on their first set of shows across the border in June, a five-show stint with stops including New York City and Boston. Plans to expand the tour remain a possibility. The band will just have to wait and see where their hard work will take them.

My Dad vs Yours / Casa del Popolo / 4873 Saint-Laurent Blvd. / Wed. March 8 / 8:30 p.m. / with Sally Paradise and Beat for Sale / \$8



"THIS IS A PARTY!"

Andrew WK Wants A Reaction From You



Last Friday, Andrew WK was at Concordia to help ring in the Art Matters celebrations.

• ADAM KOVAC

Andrew WK wasn't always real.

I don't mean that as in, he didn't physically exist. He clearly does, as his hulking frame, long hair, unkempt beard and trademark white duds are sitting in front of me in a small office in the Hall building's seventh floor, and will shortly take the stage in front of a rapt audience of over 300 Concordia students (several of whom will be given hugs by the rock star/DJ/motivational speaker).

And I don't mean that he doesn't exist in the "Andrew WK is a character played by several actors and is all orchestrated by a mysterious man named Steev Mike" conspiracy theory way either.

Andrew WK is in fact a real dude who was born Andrew Wilkes-Krier. But he wasn't always Andrew WK.

"I wanted to feel excited and I wanted to feel happy and confident, and I wanted to feel cool," he said, leaning back and propping his feet up on a filing cabinet (his shoes, it should be noted, fit in

with the overall white motif of what appears to be the only outfit he owns).

"So I just thought about what would the coolest person in the world do in this situation? Or how would the most strong, awesome dude act if this happened to him? And I just started thinking of things in those terms, almost like a superhero," he said. "But I don't think it's someone that isn't me, I think we all have the potential to be the greatest thing we can imagine."

In town to give one of his patented motivational speeches—his first formal one at a Canadian university—and perform a DJ set in honour of the opening of Art Matters on March 4, WK seems incredibly content with where his career is at the moment.

True, he's no longer at the same level of success he was when his debut *I Get Wet* came out in 2002, but he's maintained a cult-like audience for his upbeat punk/metal/rock/sheer joy mixture.

WK's career has spun off in many weird directions, like host-

ing the kids show *Destroy, Rebuild, Destroy* on the Discovery Channel and the aforementioned speeches and DJ gigs. But it's all just varied manifestations of that conscious creation that has become Andrew WK.

"It's all coming from the same place, which is what makes it possible to do different activities, I find," he said. "Being busy or having a lot of different activities or interests, it can fracture your attention, your power and ability to dilute them. Or it can actually amplify them and enhance them. I've been trying to follow an organic route to the various paths I've chosen, so they all feed off each other."

"I want to use every possible outlet for creating this feeling of excitement and intensity and raw energy."

Of course, it's not all work and no play. That would make the proverbial Johnny a very, very dull boy.

"Taking anything too seriously, especially life itself and any pursuit you can do in life is a big mistake. Life, existence, the universe as we understand it, reality, it's

very absurd, it's a very strange phenomenon. Our lack of understanding should not be so stressful or crushing or depressing rather than liberating or inspiring."

If you doubt WK's sincerity about the absurd, all you had to do was sit through his lecture. Topics ranged from why Mick Mars was the best member of Mötley Crüe to how to build the perfect turkey sandwich (the secret: slightly wilted lettuce and thin meat that you can fold to create "ripples" and air pockets).

This is a man who finished a speech at a prominent university with a several minute long treatise on why wet dog food is infinitely tastier than dry (the latter tends to give you cotton mouth).

So how do you reconcile the mad man famous for such so-dumb-they're-genius songs like "Party Hard?" Who boasts of enjoying canine cuisine? Who is a well-spoken man who spoke effortlessly about the concept of identity? And who has garnered a reputation for being one of the smartest people in rock and roll (a charge he dismissed by saying

"The only person that I care about thinking that I'm smart is me, and I don't even think that I'm that smart)?"

It's actually pretty easy. He's in it to elicit a reaction—any reaction.

"I want to give people a physical feeling, and that's really what's most important, not whether they think I'm intelligent or clever, but whether I gave them some kind of real sensation they could experience," he said.

And if you ever find yourself feeling the crush of your human insignificance, which, as WK said, is "very very very very very VERY VERY" depressing, listen to your inner voice.

"Listen to your inner-most voice that goes beyond likes and dislikes," WK said at his lecture. "Feel it fearlessly, because, what else are we working for?"

In other words, in an often-dark world, sometimes there is a light at the end of the tunnel. If you're ever lost and trying to find your way, don't be surprised if that light is just a blindingly white t-shirt. He's here to help.

2011

General Election

March 18, 2011 4:00 p.m. H-649

All of *The Link's* editorial positions will be open.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Libel Magnet.

You get to make the big calls, demand coffee from overworked underlings and appear in court for all libel lawsuits.

COORDINATING EDITOR

Web 2.0 Captain.

Direct the newspaper's online content, staying on top of the news, fringe and sports cycles. 24/7/365. Sleep optional.

MANAGING EDITOR

Tree Killer.

Ever felt like directing a slew of editors writing long-form stories, attempting to breathe life into an industry in decline?

NEWS EDITOR

Ambulance Chaser.

Direct the newspaper's online news content. Make friends with politicians, learn the acronyms, attempt to salvage your sanity.

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Robin.

Help the news editor avoid insanity for as long as possible. Work hard on the small stories, work small on the hard stories.

FRINGE ARTS EDITOR

Hipster Royalty.

Tell Concordia and Montreal where the best shows and artists are to be found. You're online and daily. Short, dirty and fringe.

SPORTS EDITOR

Jock-in-Chief.

Sports is going online. Get your game shorts, your stats and all the information that Stingers fanatics need.

CURRENT AFFAIRS EDITOR

Secret Weapon.

How does 3,000 words and a great layout sound to you? The powerful and politicians will shake at your printed words.

CULTURE EDITOR

Thespian Stalker.

From the literary arts to the dance floor. Write thousands of words on anarcho-traditional-porn-grind. Maybe invent it.

LIFESTYLE EDITOR

Colour Blind.

You aren't the fashionista or interior designer. You write about the Stingers and haterade, in long-form print delight.

OPINIONS EDITOR

Stamp Licker.

Get the letters, the rants and the crazy. Tell the people why the green space men trump the grey. Reserved for paper.

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Don Draper.

Make sure that the newspaper's print edition looks good. Get the photos hot, the graphics sharp and the words tight.

PHOTO EDITOR

Soul Snatcher.

Take the shots that convey the emotion, the sense of defeat and the utter embarrassment of being caught red handed.

GRAPHICS EDITOR

Kindergarten.

These swirls and lines are essential for making big numbers edible. They also look so purty everywhere but Current.

COPY EDITOR

Word Smith.

Keep us out of the headlines, out of jail and out of synonym hell. Make all the words work; hard to do with so many.

COMMUNITY EDITOR

Pontifex Maximus.

Make friends, make ads and make the newspaper the most jumpin' recruiting machine on campus. Bar none.

THE CONTENDERS

Eligible To Run

Myriam Arsenault, Laura Beeston, Eric Bent, Pierre Chauvin, Dominique Cote, Christopher Curtis, Alex Di Pietro, Megan Dolski, Melissa Fuller, Colin Harris, Christopher Hampson, Julia Jones, David Kaufmann, Adam Kovac, Simon Liem, Elizabeth Lee, Vivien Leung, Clement Liu, Dylan Maloney, Christopher Olson, Alexander Manley, Alex McGill, Ashley Opheim, Erin Sparks, Julian Ward, Meagan Wohlberg, Julia Wolfe.

One More Contribution Needed

Christina Bell, Esther Bernard, Michelle Lannen, Matt Marotti.

Applications must be posted in *The Link* office by March 11 at 4:00 p.m.

Applications for the positions must be posted one week before the election in *The Link* office, Hall building, room H-649. Applicants must have contributed to at least four (4) issues during Volume 31 and must include a one-page letter of intent, as well as three (3) contribution samples.

For more information email editor@thelinknewspaper.ca



THE LiNK
It's Good For You



Head Coach John Dore is congratulated after the Stingers become provincial champions. PHOTO DYLAN MALONEY

PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONS

Concordia Stingers Beat Laval For a Spot at Nationals

• DAVID KAUFMANN

Concordia 77

Laval 67

The Concordia Stingers are headed to the CIS championship after a bitter fight against the Laval Rouge et Or. The Stingers snatched the provincial title in a 77-67 win at the Loyola Gym.

"This is what we do all the time," said Stingers guard Decee Kraah after an 18-point evening. "We believed in each other, we played great defence and we took care of the ball."

ConU got the ball rolling, but it didn't take long for the opposition to catch up. By the time first quarter was over, Laval was lead-

ing 18-11 and 42-31 at halftime. But the Stingers had more fight in them than was indicated by the scores.

"We believed in each other, we played great defense and we took care of the ball."

-Decee Kraah, Stinger Guard

"Laval cooled off in the second half and we took advantage," said Stingers guard Kyle Desmarais, who netted 14 points.

With an opening basket from Desmarais, and Kraah cashing in on a Laval foul that saw him sink both of his free throws, the Stingers chipped away at Laval's lead point by point.

Moments later, with a three pointer by Kraah and a basket from forward James Clark, the Stingers regained the lead for the first time since the beginning of the game.

"They picked it up a notch, and we simply didn't respond," said Rouge et Or head coach Jacques Paiement in response to his team's second half downfall.

Sure enough, Laval succumbed to the Stingers offence in the fourth quarter, netting a mere 10 points against Concordia's 23.

While Laval proved to be stiff competition at first, the wheels fell off in the dying minutes as guards Xavier Baribeau and Alexandre Prophete fouled out, paving the way to the CIS nationals for the Stingers.

Scoreboard

Men's Basketball

W 89-74 v UQAM **tue**

Women's Basketball

L 54-65 v UQAM **wed**

Schedule

MEN'S BASKETBALL

@ Halifax v Carleton FRIDAY, MAR. 11

Caution To All But Mice

Creatine: Its Benefits and Secret Dangers



GRAPHIC CHRISTOPHER OLSON

• ALI TUSERKANI

Being 6'2 and weighing 160 pounds gets you in trouble sometimes. You could bench press two plates when working out and maybe even be a hero and superset with widespread chin ups, but your regiment does not do your frame justice. Your spotter or testosterone filled colleagues tell you at the gym, "eat, eat, eat," but the next step would be gluttony, and you don't want to sin. So, your other buddy says, "make a shake," and winks.

After you walk away from your buddy, you think about the next alternative: Creatine.

Experiments have shown that Creatine supplementation has improved the health of mice, but the positive effects on human beings are still quite uncertain. With the vast variety of muscle enhancement products out there, Creatine has somehow been affiliated with the loosely used and ambiguous terms "nutrition" and "enhancement."

Discovered almost a century ago by two researchers from Harvard University, Creatine was not commercially available until 1993

when it was introduced to the sports nutrition market under the name "Phosphagen." Creatine is usually taken by athletes and anyone trying to "body-build" in pursuit of gaining muscle mass or enhancing maximum power and performance in high-intensity anaerobic work like running/cycling and low repetition weightlifting.

There are a number of methods for ingestion; powder mixed with water/juice/milk, or capsules, on an average length of 2/3 months at a time which may or may not include a loading phase (different dosage amounts within cycle).

Before we get skeptical, Creatine, as I have personally witnessed, does work. It will give you that boost; it will do its job.

Alex Pierre, a former sports and conditioning trainer with LA Fitness, stated, "It's going to give you that push you need, with size and strength you know, but there's a limit on what it's going to do for you. It depends on how long you're willing to take it. I would say try it out for 8 weeks and then work off those results if you absolutely have to."

Reza Tuserkani, who has over a

decade of personal training and exercise science experience, answers, "It works, depending on your body, how you train and your

"I would really recommend athletes find another alternative, because there are many clinical studies that suggest [Creatine has a] severe effect on the kidney's after someone stops using it."

- Linda Schruher,
Naturopath and
Holistic Practitioner

lifestyle of course, but think about it—[the] body can gain about 1 kg in a week. You have to understand that it's simply due to greater water retention inside the muscle

cells."

From my personal experience, I got the results I wanted. I was satisfied, I got stronger really fast, and, most importantly, the results were clearly visible. I took Creatine once a day, 5 days a week, for 8 weeks, and then I stopped completely. I just wanted to test my body; I wanted to see a change, one I felt I deserved. Of course I acknowledged that it was not permanent and therefore I never got too attached to my new and appreciated physique.

A few weeks after my trial, having the same conditioning program, diet and lifestyle it was clearly evident that the results were gone. I was not disappointed; I was now anxious and somewhat worried about the aftermath. Fortunately I did not see nor feel any harm after using Creatine, and if I did, it wasn't visible to me.

When I spoke to Reza Tuserkani about my experience, he suggested that there were [biological] consequences, but having only taken it for 8 weeks in accordance with my nutrition and lifestyle was probably the reason they didn't show, or if they did and it went unnoticed, were minimal.

Interested in what could have happened, I spoke to Linda Schruher, a local Naturopath and Holistic practitioner.

"I would really recommend athletes find another alternative, because there are many clinical studies that suggest [Creatine has a] severe effect on the kidneys after someone stops using it," said Schruher. She asked me if I had any cysts, acne or rashes afterwards, and oddly enough I did, which I had dismissed at the time.

Schruher said that these cysts, the acne and the rashes, "is the body's way of reacting to something—a discharge of something toxic the body has no place for."

She told me that I was lucky if that's all that transpired, adding that within her professional career, she has seen problems arise regarding the heart, liver, skin and joints.

Creatine is marketed well; most users are very much misinformed of the consequences. It is important that any curious individual does their own research, evaluates the risks involved, reads the instructions and researches the ingredients before making a decision.

Gay-Bashing

Pre-Fight Slurs are Unsportsmanlike



• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

When UFC middleweight Michael Bisping used a homophobic slur to insult his opponent before their Feb. 26 fight, he crossed a line.

As a fight fan, I enjoy the occasional pointed barb or two to spice things up, but using hate speech sets a dangerous precedent. I wish I could say that Bisping's slur was an isolated event. Unfortunately, over the past few years it has become increasingly clear that MMA culture is far too tolerant of homophobia.

Last year, former UFC light heavyweight champion Quinton Jackson made a number of overtly homophobic remarks in an interview with the *Vancouver Sun*. A few months earlier, UFC President Dana White publically called a female journalist a "dyke" for criticizing the fight promotion's managerial procedure.

I don't assume that every time a

fighter uses a homophobic insult it's meant as an attack on gays. But no matter what their intended purpose is, words have the power to humiliate and dehumanize a person.

I also don't believe that this problem is limited to the UFC. Most sports I have played foster an atmosphere that does not discourage the use of homophobia to deride someone as weak or effeminate. And beyond sports, the depiction of gays on television and in movies almost always uses harmful stereotypes for a cheap laugh.

Sure, it seems hypocritical for me to be fine with two men trying to beat each other limp but to take offense when one of them says something hateful. But hey, whatever happens among consenting adults is cool with me.

My problem is that Bisping's remarks have been completely overlooked by most fans and by UFC management. If there were some

kind of code of conduct in place, where hateful remarks were met with fines and suspensions, then fighters would think twice about the kind of language they use to get a rise out of each other. When a player from any other major sporting organization uses hate speech, he or she is reprimanded without question.

But fines and suspensions can only slightly curtail the problem. Fans are also partially to blame here. After AOL fight blogger Michael David Smith wrote a piece opposing Bisping's remarks, people posted comments below the article calling Smith's sexual orientation into question. A number of posters described homosexuality as "disgusting" and suggested gays should always be the object of ridicule.

This kind of deplorable attitude proves how far the sport needs to evolve if it will ever break into mainstream culture. It also gives critics

more ammunition to dismiss MMA as barbaric and ugly.

It also creates the illusion that most fighters are homophobes, which isn't the case at all. Most MMA fighters live by the martial arts ethos of respect for others and behave with dignity.

In an interview with *The Link*, Montreal MMA trainer Firas Zahabi said he enforces a strict code of conduct with his fighters where hate speech of any kind is not tolerated. His star pupil, UFC welterweight champion Georges St-Pierre, has also spoken out against homophobia. Former champion Frank Shamrock is actively involved in an anti-bullying campaign and has also worked to fight homophobic bullying.

What these athletes realize is that they are role models and, as such, they set the tone for what is acceptable and unacceptable to their millions of fans around the world.



Academia, Apartheid and the Ties that Bind

• AARON LAKOFF

I met Ashraf Jabaar three years ago in Ramallah, part of occupied Palestine. Ashraf had just successfully led a campaign at his school, the Arab American University of Jenin, to boycott Israeli products across the entire campus.

Jabaar told me about how a group of young Palestinian students came together to resist their occupiers through the simple, non-violent tactic of refusing to buy Israeli juice products.

Through their research, Ashraf's group found that students at his university spent around \$1500 per day on Israeli-made juice, and through sales taxes, nearly \$100 from that was going directly to the Israeli army.

For these students, questions

surrounding boycotts of Israeli products are more than political philosophy questions. They are matters of life and death, liberty and confinement.

Every day, thousands of Palestinian university students in the occupied territories have to face military checkpoints, arbitrary arrests and road closures just to get to school.

According to the Palestinian Right to Education campaign, 411 students at Bir Zeit University alone have been incarcerated by the Israeli Defense Force since 2003.

During the brutal Israeli assault on the Gaza strip in early 2009, the Islamic university was bombed to the ground. Could any of us here at Concordia imagine what it must be like to study under these circumstances?

As students here in Montreal, our lives are more closely connected with those of students in Palestine than we think.

In 2005, student unions and academics in both Palestine and Israel put out a call to university communities around the world to cut their ties with academic institutions that are complicit in Israeli occupation and colonization.

What could this mean, tangibly? For example, both Concordia and McGill have research and student exchange programs with Technion University, an Israeli university in Haifa.

More than simply an educational institution, Technion serves as one of the research arms of the Israeli army. This technical university frequently partners itself with companies such as Elbit Systems and Rafael Advanced Sys-

tems, companies that develop and manufacture tanks, missiles and drones.

Through these research and exchange partnerships, both McGill and Concordia are indirectly normalizing relationships with institutions directly involved in egregious human rights abuses.

Despite this grim picture, there is room for change. From March 8 to the 15th, Concordia will be joining universities in over 50 cities around the world to mark the 7th annual Israeli Apartheid Week. Events during IAW will explore the possibilities for shifting these unethical programs in our school.

The time to divest from Israeli apartheid is now, as Israel continues to balk at the international community, expanding illegal settlements and thumbing its nose at the peace process.

Cutting Concordia's ties with apartheid in Israel does not mean boycotting individual Israeli academics, but rather ending institutional support, while demanding the same freedom of movement for Palestinian students as Israeli students.

At the end of the day, when we ask ourselves if, as students, it is right to push for a boycott, we must think of a person like Ashraf, who faces military checkpoints and the threat of arbitrary arrest each day on his way to school.

It would be my sincere hope that Ashraf, like any other Israeli student, have the opportunity to come to Concordia on an exchange program, but until Israeli apartheid ends, I don't think it's right to continue to pursue a relationship with such institutions.



Letters@thelinknewspaper.ca

Disappointed with Lowy

Dear Dr. Lowy,

We, the undersigned, are students who were, at the request of our respective associations, present at the Board of Governors meeting, held Feb. 17.

We wish to express our profound disappointment with your comments regarding the resolutions from all major unions, expressing either a loss of confidence in the Board of Governors or calling for the resignation of the Board's Chair Peter Kruyt.

Many unions and departments have also called for the resignation of the Executive Committee and/or of the community-at-large members of the Board. They've suggested that new members be appointed through a more democratic process.

The Graduate Students' Association held a general assembly this week at which the general membership voted for the resignation of both Mr. Kruyt and the executive committee, with replacements to be chosen by a committee divided equally between Senate and Board members.

Many graduate students left their labs, studies and exam preparations to vote on this issue, and many students spent a great deal of time preparing the event.

The council of the Concordia Student Union passed a similar resolution, resulting from an open meeting with students. To dismiss

resolutions from both official student organizations as being caused by poor communication, "feelings of victimization," and "perceptions" is disrespectful, unfounded and not your judgment to make. Nor is it Mr. Kruyt's.

Regardless of whether Mr. Kruyt considers the current universal rejection of his leadership a "challenge," or whether you feel the situation can be remedied with improved perceptions—Mr. Kruyt has not been the Board's legitimate Chair since these resolutions were passed, and nothing will make him so again.

You have called for better communication and more interaction between groups, but not for accompanying substantive changes. We came to this meeting and listened carefully to everything that was said. We have emerged from it with an even more of a negative opinion of decision-making processes at the Board of Governors, and of the humility and commitment to student concerns of certain community-at-large members, than we had before.

Finally, we feel that your calls for calm and communication were rather unevenly applied. You failed to comment on community-at-large member Mr. Charles Cavell's shameful threat of working to reduce union representation in governance at Concordia in response to these discussions.

—Holly Nazar, Rushdia Mehreen, Erik Chevrier, Louise Birdsell Bauer

The Faubourg Question

After the student centre by-election failed by a large margin last semester, the CSU executive responded to the results by stating on their website that they "are listening" to students. The CSU invited "those who opposed the increase (...) back to the drawing board" with them to address concerns.

Unfortunately, though not surprisingly, such consultation never took place. Quite the opposite—the student centre became an issue rarely mentioned by the executive for the months following the referendum.

Their silence was broken with last week's articles in the student newspapers regarding the Faubourg, which showed the CSU executives (namely Heather Lucas and Adrien Severyns), hand-in-hand with the administration, stepping up to the plate to take yet another swing at a project that has failed twice in the past year—in apparent ignorance of the 70 per cent of students who voted against the proposal last semester.

It has become clear that the only consultation the CSU executive has conducted over the past few months is with the administration.

All that this establishes is that, without a doubt, the CSU executive's intentions of consultation were little more than a façade put in place to subdue those with legitimate questions and concerns re-

garding the contract.

The student centre has failed before, and regardless of how many campaign rules are broken, it will fail again. That, to borrow from Mr. Côté's quote in one article, is something this year's executives, and the administration, "will have to accept" and move forward with as well.

—Gonzalo Nieto,
Psychology

Misconceptions

I am tempted to respond to the questionable journalistic integrity expressed by Mr. Giovannetti in last issue's "commentary" of his council of student representatives.

Instead, however, I will respond to what seems to be a commonly believed urban legend amongst certain students and student media.

The CSU council is not an aristocracy of shady "interests;" it is a democratically elected body of students. Everyone who sacrifices their time to sit around council carries the weight of at least 900 students who designated them as representatives.

These councillors do their best to determine the will of the students. This is a very difficult thing to do and I think that all councillors would agree that while, they are not perfect, they are always open to suggestions, requests and (polite and constructive) demands.

When the student councillors reacted last week to accusations of apathy, their reaction was warranted—they had done their

duty at the last meeting by creating a mobilization committee, a committee which has been tremendously successful in the work that it was tasked to do.

The criticism expressed at the end of a long and unnecessarily hostile meeting was not in the spirit of inclusiveness of the mobilization committee; they recognized this and apologized. We are all in this together and every councillor wants what's best for the students with no hidden agendas.

Don't believe us? Why not talk to us before banishing our members to the political wilderness?

—Menachem Freedman,
CSU Councillor Arts & Science

Praise For Morgan

After almost two years of campaigning for a tuition freeze with Free Education Montreal, I can say that I have never seen a CSU executive work so hard for tuition freeze and student democracy as Morgan Pudwell.

Leading up to the WHALE/SGM on Feb. 14, I personally saw Morgan go through sleepless nights, attend countless meetings, post countless posters, make countless phone calls and coordinate an enormous part of what had to happen for WHALE to be successful.

Sure, it was part of her job, but Morgan did more than was expected of her. Clearly, she was often alone within the CSU executive doing it, though I did not realize just how alone and excluded she was

prior to reading her resignation letter.

I remember being in Morgan's office one Friday watching her multi-task everything from phone calls and emails to reserving equipment for WHALE. After finding the one place in Montreal that seemed to rent out patio heaters, Morgan did everything she could to make sure we had the safest and cheapest heaters (a whopping \$604.09), so as not to overspend the CSU budget of \$1,900 for the event.

Morgan was not an executive who flung money around thoughtlessly. She was an executive who sacrificed her own mental and physical health—not for her career, as is obvious from her resignation—but for her beliefs and convictions, and mostly for the students she represents. Let me tell you, that is rare in student politics these days.

We should praise Morgan for her honesty and hard work, and hope that future executives and councillors are inspired by her.

With our tuition likely to double starting in 2012, believe me, we need it.

—Nadia Hausfather,
PhD Humanities

Only Morgan

When you get involved with fighting for accessible education and against tuition increases, you quickly discover that many student representatives are virtuosos at both pretending to take action and taking credit for the work of others.

Believe me, this is not a hopeless fight. Much more could be accomplished at Concordia if all undergraduate student representatives were giving their best effort.

When I was involved in organizing WHALE, unfortunately it was only Morgan Pudwell of the CSU executives that was around. Of the executives, it was only Morgan that gave material organizing support, and she did an inhuman amount of work.

I'm a graduate student, so I don't need to give a damn about the ins and outs of CSU politics, but I hate to see someone who works so hard and who blew me away with her effectiveness, punished because she made Heather Lucas and Adrien Severyns look bad.

Undergraduates, please don't make me deal with people like this next year.

—Holly Nazar
Free Education Montreal

A Catalyst For Change?

I am writing to you concerning the recent resignation of CSU VP Sustainability & Promotions Morgan Pudwell.

As a current CSU councillor, I have had the pleasure of working with Morgan this past year and can say without hesitation that she represented a model of commitment and dedication to students' interests (something the rest of the CSU executive could take a lesson from).

As such, it is sad to see her go. While I wish it weren't true, the description of the current state of affairs of our union found in her resignation letter is a clear and accurate picture.

Numerous councillors, myself included, can confirm having had experiences similar to those described by Morgan with respect to the operations of our union.

I would like to commend Morgan for her courage in speaking up about these issues and sincerely hope that her actions serve as a catalyst for change.

As for Morgan, may she succeed in all her future endeavours.

—Michaela Manson,
ASFA Councillor

Disappointing, but Warranted

Hearing of Morgan Pudwell's resignation from the Concordia Student Union was disappointing. She has been a consistent strong voice and an incredibly hard worker.

While her resignation was disappointing, it was very warranted.

Morgan took her job seriously, which is evident at nearly every turn. She worked tirelessly to make sure the WHALE was a wintry-hot-success and worked with myself and several others on the Mobilization Committee. At council meetings, she was always prepared, honest and articulate.

Morgan is incredibly well-liked by those she worked with. Except, perhaps, those who remain on the CSU executive.

That she was excluded from meetings, particularly around issues like the student centre, held back from important budget information and even from her own programs, demonstrates serious problems at the CSU.

Something here is broken when nearly half the executive team has resigned or left.

In short, I would like to express my support for Morgan. I know that she did not take this decision lightly and while it's disappointing to lose a strong voice for sustainability and transparency, she did what had to be done.

—Cameron Monagle,
History

Crossed Wires

I would like to apologize for the misunderstanding at the February 9th CSU council meeting.

My anger was in no way directed towards the students. Before I spoke, I asked the chair if I could address CSU executive, Morgan Pudwell. The reason why I was so upset with her saying "the volunteers are doing your job," is because, for the past few weeks, I've been in and out of the CSU office and I have seen her personally many times. She never mentioned the heavy workload involved with WHALE. I felt that during the meeting, her goal was to make the councillors and her own fellow executives look bad, potentially to advance her own personal agenda.

Again, my anger had nothing to do with the student volunteers. I also spoke to a few of them to thank them for their hard work.

When I said "I had no idea what it was about," I was not referring to the Special General Meeting. I was referring to an incident that happened earlier on that day. But I guess when you omit chunks of dialogue, you can get someone to

sound whichever way you choose.

Another thing I would like to address is being referred to as "non-entities in the community."

I would like to remind you of that incident in your office two weeks ago. Had you bothered to look up from your computer you might have remembered me. Yeah, you're not to pleasant yourself. Good thing I was interviewed by the more reputable Concordia newspaper, for they like us non-entities.

Had you had done your homework properly before critiquing me, or very well listened when someone was talking to you, you would have found out that I am the VP Internal of the National Society of Black Engineers, NSBE, as well as the risk management chair in Delta Phi Epsilon sorority. I'm so much of a non-entity that I was asked to run for president of NSBE and encouraged to run for an executive position on the Engineering and Computer Science Association. But don't worry I'm packing for the wilderness.

—Tamara Gordon,
CSU Councillor Engineering



Scan this QR code and skip to 32:20 to watch Tamara Gordon's controversial Council speech.

Extended Gratitude

The Cinema Students Association is disappointed to learn that the current CSU executive was not willing to work with Morgan Pudwell, an outstanding leader who has represented students with integrity in her term as VP Promotions and Sustainability.

She was invaluable to councillors during a conflict within the Fine Arts Student Alliance at the beginning of the year by providing support and guidance. Her leadership helped strengthen the Alliance as a whole. Morgan has attended many FASA Council meetings as the Fine Arts representative on the CSU, going above and beyond her position, and was a resource regarding the CSU by-laws during the rewriting of the FASA Constitution.

Morgan has been a fierce defender of student rights, active in protesting the tuition increases proposed by the Quebec government. She participated in the Student Demonstration in Quebec City on Dec. 6, as a representative of the thousands of Concordia students who would be affected by these increases.

Morgan was also integral to the WHALE campaign in organizing activities, poster and cutting through the red tape that accompanies a student assembly of more than 800 people. Though CSU President Heather Lucas spoke on behalf of the executive during the WHALE, the organiz-

ers relied on Morgan Pudwell for the assistance of the CSU.

The Cinema Students Association witnessed her intense devotion to the campaign at several planning meetings as well as during the assembly, which greatly influenced the success of the campaign.

The Cinema Students would like to extend our gratitude to Morgan and her continued dedication to the Fine Arts and Concordia communities.

—Ali Moenck,
VP Communications,
Cinema Students Association

Support Pudwell

With the noble resignation of Concordia Student Union executive Morgan Pudwell, students are losing a rare voice of compassion and reason. Pudwell's letter of resignation exposes serious faults within the CSU that merit immediate attention.

Namely, the CSU is not acting on behalf of the will of students. Pressing issues put forward by students "have not been upheld by the student representatives [at the Board of Governors]," according to Pudwell.

Even more troubling, Board student representative Amine Dabchy "has clearly disregarded the needs of students on multiple occasions and failed to report to council (as required by CSU by-laws) on his actions on the board."

On this point alone, perhaps Dabchy should resign. His actions appear to contradict his mandate. Students need someone to represent their interests on the Board, particularly during this volatile stage in Concordia's history.

But there are still more troubling points raised in Pudwell's letter. "There have been attempts to police my work schedule, my whereabouts and my friendships," Pudwell writes. "My presence at the CSU has been met with very little support from the executive. I have often been silenced under the guise of 'executive solidarity'; the executive was expected to always send a single message and to never speak out of line."

This autocratic way of running a student union is deeply troubling. No student representative should be treated with such a level of disrespect and mistreatment by their coworkers. Moreover, student organizations should be a model of democracy, not a symbol of everything that is wrong with politics today.

These are just a few points raised by Pudwell in her remarkably frank letter of resignation. All of them merit due consideration. One can also expect Pudwell's arguments and name to be dragged through a tangled web of distortion and deceit. As she states in her letter, however, "I know students are smart enough to recognize these sorts of accusations for what they are."

My deepest respect, support and admiration goes out to Pudwell in what has, and will con-

tinue to be, a very difficult and brave decision. Thank you, Morgan.

I trust that students will hold their union accountable. More importantly, I truly hope that students will put in hard work and develop the kind of friendships necessary "for a better campus, a better union, and a better community."

—Matthew Brett,
MA Political Science

Utmost Respect

I want to express support for Morgan Pudwell, ex-VP Sustainability & Promotions for the CSU, in her resignation last week.

Morgan has taken the courageous step to resign because of her sincere commitment to students' interests and her conviction for an accountable and transparent student union.

I have seen her incredible efforts during this school year to carry out her mandate and to represent students on issues including eco-awareness, sustainability, corporate influence on campus and tuition fee increases.

Her tremendous contributions working together with students-at-large to put together the SGM/WHALE on Feb. 14 have especially left an impression on me.

Morgan has consistently put students' interests first, and her resignation is a testament to that.

The factors leading to this are clear. Morgan was expected to comply while the rest of the executive silenced her and acted directly in conflict with the concerns students have voiced about purchasing the Faubourg for the student centre, and the disarray of the university due to corrupt governance.

She was expected to straight-up lie about their finances while the CSU was being steered by external forces in a direction detrimental to student interests—one which disregards actual student representation and instead favours the administration.

I am certain that in making this difficult decision, Morgan had the best interests of the student body in mind and that this was the only way she could be honest and transparent to her constituency.

Morgan has chosen to defend the rights of over 30,000 students she could not know individually, above many of her personal relationships, her reputation and her job. This is admirable. It is the first time I've seen real courage and loyalty (to students) coming from the CSU.

I have the utmost respect for Morgan and I wish her the very best.

—Irmak Bahar,
Molecular Biology

Out of Context

I'd like to address the commentary printed in Vol. 31, Issue 24 of *The Link* accusing student representatives of having no manners. In this article, myself along with a few other councillors were referred to as being rude

and arrogant.

The reasoning being that I was nodding to what councillor Tamara Gordon was saying when she expressed her offence to the blame being put on council by CSU executive Morgan Pudwell.

Well, if I nodded, it's because I agreed with what she was saying. Morgan was accusing council of not taking part in the organization of the WHALE; however no one, including herself, had ever contacted us about it.

Reaching us by email is simply a click away for her. Most of us are more than happy to help with the organization and volunteering of events for the CSU. We like to get involved and encourage other students to do so as well. After all, that's why a lot of us got involved with CSU in the first place!

Of course, no one would be able to understand that having read last week's commentary, because things change when you take them completely out of context, don't they?

I apologize if I seemed rude, that was definitely not my intention, and none of my frustration was directed towards the student volunteers.

Now, to suggest that many members of council are "non-entities of the community" is just being plain ignorant.

I, myself, am VP of Membership Development in my international sorority Delta Phi Epsilon, as well as VP Internal on the John Molson Marketing Association. I have also volunteered for various Concordia associations on countless occasions and I even work for the school as a tour guide.

I know for a fact that most, if not all, of the other council members are part of other associations as well. All of this could have been discovered with a little bit of homework.

Contrary to popular belief, being part of the community does not just start and end with taking part in sneaky politics and getting write-ups in *The Link*.

All this being said, I commend the student volunteers and CSU executives on all the work they did

for the WHALE. Quite frankly, they did an amazing job and none of it could have been possible without them.

—Alison Revine,
CSU Councillor Fine Arts

Saddened and Shocked

As a member of CSU Council, I was shocked and deeply saddened by the resignation of Morgan Pudwell from the CSU executive.

I find it absolutely appalling that the CSU has not been upholding the wishes of students and find it even worse to hear that they have treated a member of their executive with such disrespect by excluding her from their meetings.

I sincerely hope that as Morgan has suggested, the CSU opts to re-evaluate its priorities and seriously consider the actions that it has undertaken this academic year. I encourage students at large to attend the upcoming CSU Council meeting, this Wednesday, March 9th at 6:30 pm in room #H-760

Both Morgan's resignation, and the behavior of the CSU executive need to be addressed.

—Melanie Hotchkiss,
CSU Councillor Arts & Science

Thanks, Morgan

With the resignation of VP Sustainability & Promotions Morgan Pudwell, the CSU and Concordia at large lost one of its greatest assets.

In my short time here at Concordia, I have had the pleasure of working with Morgan on numerous occasions in the realm of student activism, most notably on WHALE.

Her drive and perseverance served as an inspiration. Without her expert knowledge of Concordia's infrastructure, WHALE would not have been the success that it was.

Morgan devoted countless hours in service of the student population to ensure that bookings for spaces were made, tables for advertising the event were filled, and I even found her on Reggie's terrace shoveling snow on the day of WHALE.

Morgan's resignation shows the depth of her commitment to the

university. With her departure, she sheds light on the serious condition of the CSU.

The CSU's inability to meet the demands of their constituents will be all the more apparent with Morgan gone, as she was one of the few who took their positions seriously and addressed students' concerns and criticisms in a professional manner.

The grievances that drove Morgan to resign are both numerous and valid, and they are grievances that every student should have. The lack of transparency and accountability within the CSU that drove away one of their greatest assets needs to be addressed swiftly.

And to Morgan, I say thank you for your amazing work and your representation. I hope you choose to continue to work with student groups and help us address the numerous concerns facing Concordia today.

—Kyle McLoughlin,
Sociology & Anthropology

Grace and Courage

I want to express my utmost support for Morgan Pudwell, who resigned in protest this Friday from her position as VP Sustainability and Promotions at the CSU.

I want to commend her incredible grace and courage in the face of injustice. Specifically, as a CSU councillor, her resignation letter means a lot to me; it has become increasingly difficult to speak out against the sheer incompetence, mismanagement and lack of transparency at our union.

Her bravery is an inspiration. I imagine that there is a strong possibility that other letters this week will read as petty personal attacks or attempts to damage her credibility. Students, I'm sure, will see those attacks for what they are—acts of desperation.

Concordia deserves better, Morgan is an example of what every student representative should strive to be.

—Lex Gill,
Political Science,
School of Community
and Public Affairs



Dear Melissa,

My boyfriend and I are both into talking dirty. More specifically, he likes calling me names and stuff. This really turns me on too, but all of my girlfriends tell me that I'm letting him degrade me, and that it shows a lack of respect for women. Can it be so wrong if I'm actually enjoying it?

—Dirty Girl

I've got a simple test for you to see if there is really a problem here: do you ever actually feel degraded by your boyfriend in your relationship? I'm guessing you don't. (If you do, then you wrote in about the wrong problem.)

If you're still unsure, think about how your boyfriend treats you outside of the bedroom. Do you see signs of your "degrading" sex life creeping into your relationship?

If not, then I think you're both just acting out a fantasy, which is perfectly healthy. In fact, acting out a fantasy together that involves an amount of vulnerability is actually a positive thing, because it requires a certain level of trust and means you don't need to censor your fantasies with this person.

To explain it further, consider rape fantasies. If a person were actually being raped, they obviously wouldn't enjoy it at all. However, pretending to be raped by a partner who you are really attracted to and probably have a personal connection with isn't the same as actually being forced into sex.

Furthermore someone who has actually been raped probably wouldn't want to role-play it because it would force them to relive a reality they have faced. But the fact that it's make-believe and is taking place within the safe confines of a bedroom makes the experience completely different.

If your boyfriend were someone who disrespected women on a daily basis through his words or actions, then you probably wouldn't be so into him mouthing off to you in the bedroom, but I'm guessing he doesn't do that.

You might also want to talk about this with your boyfriend to see how he feels about the situation. Keeping the conversation open will also help if ever there comes a time where you stop feeling comfortable, or want to draw a line somewhere.

My personal opinion has always been that the partner with whom you can experiment and truly let your guard down is the one who you will have the most fulfilling relationship with, since you're free to try anything.

I also know plenty of women who let themselves be disrespected in public by their boyfriends, but then feel truly loved because they have "romantic" sex. I don't think the kind of sex you have is an accurate representation of the kind of relationship you're in.

The biggest problem with sharing intimate details about your sex life with friends is that it opens it up for analysis and personal reactions that aren't necessarily representative of your feelings. It also really sucks because it might make you question or doubt your own desires.

Sexuality can vary hugely from one person to the next and openness to exploring and accepting your sexual self will only lead to positive experiences. You can't help or decide what turns you on. Your friends may not understand it, but they don't have to—because they're not the ones trying to turn you on in bed.

—Melissa Fuller

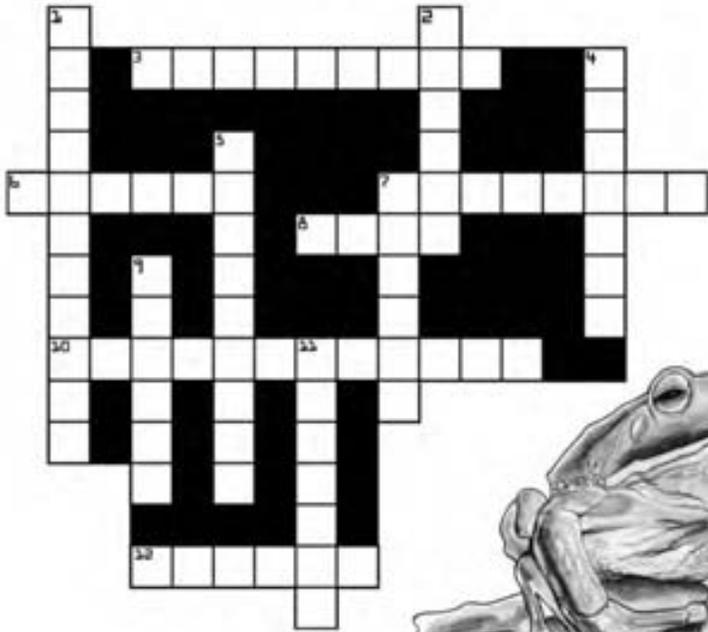


MARLEE MACMILLAN

Quik-X

“Famous Frogs”

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON



Across

3. Because children can't resist the attraction of frog-based mascots, this beer brand was criticized for its use of frogs as spokesmen. Alas, short skirts and cleavage just won't cut it with today's impressionable tots.
6. Adjectival form of word for someone who slides unintentionally for a short distance, typically losing their balance or footing. Or, your incompetent wingman in the Super NES game Star Fox, which featured furies in flying machines.
7. This cartoon frog made his debut in "One Froggy Evening," and later became the mascot for The WB Television Network. He takes his name from a U.S. state, whose name in turn means "large lake" in Ojibwe... I guess.
8. A small, round growth caused by viral infection and erroneously linked to touching toads. Or, the villain in the Super Mario Brothers' second outing—you see, this is a crossword about "famous" frogs, not "random facts about" frogs.
10. Ancient Greek playwright and

author of the comedy *The Frogs*—although if you ask me, it's not nearly as funny as *Two and A Half Men*... what's that? Discontinued!? What does he MEAN he's "winning"?

12. Not to be confused with the Morlocks from H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, these amphibious critters roam the lands of Azeroth in the massively popular, massively multiplayer online role-playing game *World of Warcraft*.

Down

1. The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles can be blamed for spawning this frog-based rip-off for the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1991. And while you're blaming TMNT, blame that bag of blow in my toilet's water tank for giving me a drug habit.
2. The first frog you thought of when you found out this crossword would be about frogs. Yes, that one. I'm not even including any other clues. I won't even mention the disturbing improbability of his choice of gal pals... she's of the porcine persuasion.

4. Arcade games don't get simpler than *Space Invaders*. But, for a little more complicated fare, there was always this frog-based virtual reality simulator.
5. All hail this brainwashing amphibian from cartoonist Matt Groening's *Futurama*. Or don't. It's not like you're under the control of a Brain Slug.
7. Add the proper honorific to this other word for "frog" and you get a character from *The Wind in the Willows*. And no, it's not "Regimental Sergeant Major Bullfrog."
9. You know the story. You kiss a frog, he turns into a future autocratic ruler the day his father either croaks or abdicates the throne. Hehe. Croaks. Great pun.
11. Poliwag and Politoed are battle-ravaged frogs from this Japanese video game sensation. Fortunately, they prove to be much better fighters than real frogs. "Buy a few frogs at the pet store, and people will pay to see them fight," he said. "But frogs aren't known for being great fighters," I said. "Well, look at it this way," he said...

editorial

WAKE UP CALL

It's been quite the week here for Concordia University. It's been the kind of week that makes you stop and wonder, what the hell is going on here?

First, Concordia Student Union VP Sustainability & Promotions Morgan Pudwell resigned and in her pointed letter of resignation, she accused her fellow CSU executives of a variety of transgressions—including collaborating with the school on pushing a student centre building that has been rejected by the students on multiple occasions and shady financial maneuvering that has resulted in the CSU going way over budget.

Just weeks after their greatest political triumph, the WHALE protest against impending tuition increases, the CSU has lost the executive that was overwhelmingly perceived as being the driving force behind it.

Since Pudwell stepped down, the CSU has also refused to answer questions about her departure, their spending on a pro-student centre campaign, and remained vague on the rationale of two groups being struck from asking for an increased fee levy in the upcoming byelection.

And all this culminated in a half-hearted protest outside the doors of this very newspaper—ironically calling for a free press, despite the fact that none of the protesters would identify themselves or answer any questions as to what, exactly, they were protesting and who organized the gathering.

Even if only half of Pudwell's accusations are true, and even if the CSU has an explanation for their barrage of "no comments," there is something very wrong happening here.

In her letter of resignation, Pudwell charges former CSU president and current student representative on the Board of Governors Amine Dabchy of playing puppet master—controlling the political scene, despite no longer being an elected CSU official.

A source who Dabchy has denied ever meeting or knowing in any capacity, has also come forward with allegations that Dabchy attempted to recruit him to run on a new slate.

In short, this entire mess has been an unacceptable bypassing of the democratic principles upon which student government should be based, and something is seriously wrong with the state of student politics at Concordia.

When repeatedly asked for comment on the condition of transparency currently upheld at this university, CSU VP Loyola & Advocacy Hassan Abdullahi told an editor of *The Link* that "our responsibility is to the students, not to *The Link* or anyone else."

But everyone on this masthead happens to be a Concordia student, and we deserve an explanation.

What we have instead is a complete breakdown in discourse between the students and the CSU. It seems that they have completely lost perspective on who they are there to represent, and the proper way to do so.

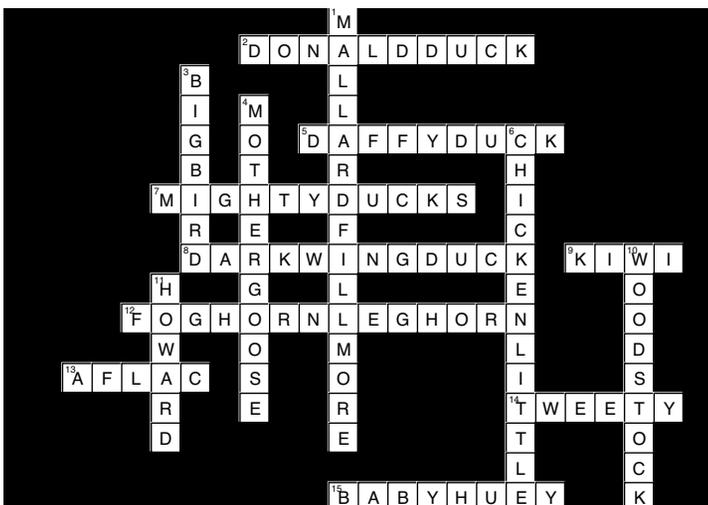
Faced with a crisis of confidence in the wake of Pudwell's resignation, rather than face the music, they have cancelled two press conferences and refused to offer any explanation.

On Wednesday, the CSU will be holding their monthly council meeting. It promises to be a fiery one, if students show up to demand accountability. *The Link* will see you there.

—Adam Kovac,
Features Editor

Correction: In Vol. 31, Issue 24, Page 15 *The Link* printed false pronouns of trans artist Johnston Newfield. *The Link* regrets the error.

issue 24 crossword solutions





CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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Cultural Calendar

• COMPILED BY LAURA BEESTON,
CHRIS OLSON & JULIA JONES

This year on March 8, *The Link* joins community groups across the city, country and world to celebrate the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day.

This day is marked by an influx of female-driven, cultural content and output. The following is a compilation of some things to go and see to commemorate female culture throughout the month.

Today, March 8, why not check out the following:

The Slaves of the Slaves Rise Up!

Cabot Square
6:00 p.m.

Opposing capitalism, imperialism and patriarchy within and outside the home, in the political, economic and religious spheres, the Committee of Women of Diverse Origins stated that this year's march, entitled "The Slaves of the Slaves Rise Up!" will also celebrate landmark anniversaries of different women's groups. Attendees are encouraged to bring banners, signs and noise-makers.

Join Me on the Bridge

Jean Drapeau Metro Station to Jacques Cartier Bridge
6:00 p.m.

The Women for Women International will mark IWD by inviting women to join together at 6 p.m. at the Jean Drapeau Metro Station on Ile St. Hélène and walk to the Jacques Cartier Bridge, carrying 100 candles to represent the 100th anniversary of IWD

Tell Her Story

ourpinkthoughts.blogspot.com
All day

Our Pink Thoughts will be posting inspirational stories about Canadian women on their website, as told by various authors, all day during IWD.

Attention Féministes!

Cinéma ONF (1564, Saint-Denis, Montréal) 7 p.m.

Vidéo Femmes invites you to the launch of *Féministes!*, a film by Rozenn Potin, which will be attended by the producer and protagonists, who will participate in an open debate after the screening on March 16.

The film will be at the Cinéma ONF, from March 14 to 17, each day at 7 p.m. and is free of charge.

The Edgy Women Festival

In its 18th edition, the Edgy Women Festival, taking place March 19th to April 2nd, gathers local, national and international artists together to explore themes of identity, gender and power dynamics through performance and community-building activities.

This year's "Edgy Offenders" include San Fran Dyke darlings Annie Sprinkle and Elizabeth Stephens, Japanese performance artist anti-cool, and Brooklyn-based Narcissister, to name a few.

For more information about the extensive and exciting programme, check out edgywomen.ca.

For the rest of March, the Concordia Student Union, in association with Volunteers in Action, will be hosting a series of events to commemorate women. Each of the events, unless otherwise specified, will take place on the 7th floor Lounge in the Hall Building.

Wednesday, March 9

Film Screening: *Soul Sisters*
A film screened during Montreal's 2009 International Black Film Festival
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Thursday, March 10

Photo Exhibit: What does Feminism Look like?
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Workshop: Women's Sexuality
7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Location TBA

Monday, March 11

Women of Rock: Local bands celebrate IWD with music.
Featuring Triggered Response, Curism The Dryheaves, Medusa.
Café Campus (57 Prince Arthur St. E.)
Tickets \$15

March 12 & 13

Self-Defence Workshops
12 p.m. to 4 p.m.
MB-763

March 12 & 23

The annual 78/100 Bake Sale
Women get to pay for goodies at the standard they're salaried, which remains at 78 cents to a man's dollar.
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Monday, March 15

Panel Discussion: Feminism Through the Eyes of Concordia
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

09WOMEN'S
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